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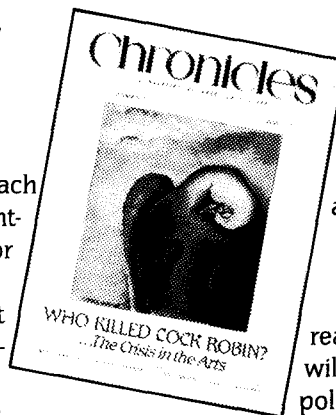
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Chronicles A Magazine of American Culture

Jeffrey Richards

Yobbery with Violence

On the New Cult of Barbarism



IN A WIDELY publicised speech, the British Education Minister Chris Patten declared: "We risk the creation of a yob society and an impoverished culture." He was wrong. The yob society is not a risk; it is already a reality. I was recently provided with a vivid snapshot of it when travelling from the north to Birmingham for Aston Villa's last home match of the season, an important fixture against Chelsea on which Villa's continued First Division status depended. The railway carriage in which I was sitting was invaded and occupied by a group of Chelsea football supporters, who gave me the perfect opportunity to observe some prime specimens of *juvenis Britannicus* in action. So I laid aside the volume on Victorian aesthetic theory which I was reading, and took notes.

They were, perhaps surprisingly, from Carlisle, a noble border town at the opposite end of the country from the London borough of Chelsea. This represents the tendency during the last 25 years, with the break-up of close-knit inner-city working-class communities, for local footballing loyalties to be abandoned by a rootless, mercenary young, who attach themselves to the clubs which are most successful or notorious, depending on whether football or violence is their objective. "We are Cumbrians—we are barmy—we are off our fucking heads", they chanted. It is not uncommon for insanity to be invoked with admiration by such groups, as a synonym for aggressive nonconformity, a rejection of all established norms and values, mirrored in football chants praising "the Yorkshire Ripper" and other mass-murderers. Even without the chants, they were identifiable from their "skinhead" haircuts and distinctive garb as members of a recognisable youth sub-group with a powerful visual aura of

menace reminiscent of the Dickensian convicts depicted by Cruikshank.

Having established their *bona fides* as nonconformists, they proceeded throughout the journey to defy all recognised canons of decency, decorum, moderation and restraint by constantly swearing, loudly guffawing, belching, and commenting uninhibitedly on passengers, railway staff, and each other. They drank continuously, and when they were not playing cards or parading in and out of the lavatory, they conducted forays up and down the train in search of "Villa boys" to beat up. (I took the precaution of removing my Villa lapel badge for the duration of the journey.)

As the drink flowed more freely and their tongues loosened even faster, they began chanting. Many of the chants expressed what they would do to rival supporters, the main refrain being variations of "Slash", "maim", and "kill". Typical and chanted to the tune of *What shall we do with the drunken sailor* was "What shall we do with the Blackburn Rovers—stab, stab, stab." But soon the content of the chants changed. "Red, white and blue, the National Front are after you" proclaimed an adherence to the extreme fascist Right, and then came the inevitable racist attacks on Jews ("Gas the Jews") and Blacks ("Send the bastards back").

Along with race hatred, sexual prowess figured among their preoccupations. One member of the group, obviously the perennial butt of their humour, was regularly taunted about his sexual inadequacy. The leader of the group loudly discussed his fears of having contracted venereal disease ("the business") from one of his contacts, fears which, it seemed, had proved unfounded but served to attest his promiscuous prowess. At the same time, homosexual proclivities were ascribed to members, supporters, and managers of rival teams, particularly Manchester United ("He is fat, he is bent, and his arse is up for rent—At . . . kin . . . son").

The world-view of this group was a sinister cocktail of racism, drunkenness, sexual aggression, and violence. An aura of evil and hatred crackled around them like sheet-lightning. Hard to imagine in this raucous group any delicacy of feeling, sensitive self-awareness, respect for others or, above all, the paramountcy of reason or scale of values which Clive Bell, in his essay of 1928, saw as lying at the heart of civilisation. Theirs is, with all due respect to Attila and Alaric, the culture of barbarism.

JEFFREY RICHARDS, Senior Lecturer in History at Lancaster University, is the author of "Age of the Dream Palace: Cinema and Society in Britain 1930-1939" (Routledge, 1984), "Thorold Dickinson: The Man and His Films" (Croom Helm, 1986), and (as co-author) "Britain Can Take It: The British Cinema in the Second World War" (Blackwell, 1986). His article "The Hooligan Culture: Violence & the Ethics of the Undermass" appeared in the November 1985 issue of *ENCOUNTER*.

It might be argued that the group was unrepresentative. Extreme, perhaps, but not necessarily all that unrepresentative of an important strand in the youth culture. *New Society's* recent survey of teenage attitudes¹ revealed that more than two out of five teenagers admitted to being racially prejudiced; and, given the nature of surveying, the real figure will have been higher. Of under-14s, 85% reckoned to have tried alcohol. Attitudes to women and sexuality among these male groups remain chauvinistic and unenlightened, as a later survey of teenage males in Manchester revealed:

"Though the rest of the world has moved on, teenage boys appear stuck in a time warp, their views of women and sex as ill-informed and irresponsible as were those of their fathers and grandfathers before them. . . ."²

Drink, racism, and *macho* male posturing are nothing new; they are commonly observed phenomena in first-hand sociological studies of the working-class young.³ But they are spreading to other groups. There is a yobbish faction, for instance, in the predominantly well-heeled, middle-class Federation of Conservative Students, which is regularly reported as drunkenly smashing up premises, calling for the legalisation of drugs and incest, chanting the praises of mass-murderers, and howling down opponents. In the youth culture in general, yobbery occupies a disturbingly important position.

IN A THOUGHTFUL, wide-ranging and stimulating book, *Football and the Decline of Britain*,⁴ the eminent social historian James Walvin persuasively argues that what has been happening in football is a mirror of what has been happening to the nation. He traces the rise of the young working-class male to dominate the football crowd, and identifies the football hooligan as the latest manifestation of a youthful subculture dating back to the original hooligans of the 19th century, and more recently seen in such groups as Teds, Rockers, and Punks, whose style involved:

"... a collective identity which often relied upon violent expression in word and deed, to impress (especially on outsiders) the strength, the creed and the image of the group identity."

My Carlisle travelling companions were perfect exemplars of this style.

¹ Michael Williams, "The Thatcher generation", *New Society*, 21 February 1986.

² Chris Carling, "Do nice girls still say 'no'?", *The Guardian*, 6 May 1986.

³ See, for instance, Howard Parker, *The View from the Boys* (David & Charles, 1974) and Paul Willis, *Profane Culture* (Routledge, 1978).

⁴ *Football and the Decline of Britain*. By JAMES WALVIN. Macmillan Press, £25.00, paper £8.95.

⁵ Cf. my own independent but parallel conclusions in "The Hooligan Culture", *ENCOUNTER*, November 1985.

Walvin argues rightly that their actions can be understood only in the wider context of recent social and economic history. He points to the interrelated structural changes destroying "the tight codes of discipline, overlapping and mutually reinforcing, in traditional working-class communities—within the family, the school and then the workplace. . . ."⁵ He indicates the misguided policies of "Redevelopment", which in the 1960s destroyed traditional working-class communities and created in their place bleak and heartless high-rise estates; the failure of the education system—with its educational philosophies geared to "short-term unstructured hedonism"; and the social consequences of mass unemployment.

As he points out, the Industrial Revolution had wrought a profound psychological change.

"Converting labouring people, long accustomed to different pre-industrial rhythms of labour, to the need to recognise the external disciplines of time, punctuality and application, and to internalise these disciplines was one of the major achievements of the years of industrial change and development."

With "Redevelopment", mass unemployment, and educational change, the internal discipline and social sanctions imposed by the old working-class communities, by the factory system, by the pre-1960s school system—and also by sport, codified and regulated by men who believed in the public school traditions of "fair play" and "being a sporting loser"—have all broken down. The young are no longer formally imbued by any agency with any of the values society needs to survive—above all, self-awareness, a sense of restraint, and concern for others. Where these *are* instilled and this *does* still happen, in some respects—it is sporadic, haphazard, and unsystematic.

No government can be blamed for this development. It is the poisoned legacy of the social and cultural revolution of the 1960s, a legacy which daily embitters and impoverishes our society. But current governmental policy, identified as it is with mass unemployment, educational impoverishment, and social divisiveness, is not only doing little to reverse the trend; it is positively exacerbating it.

Walvin largely omits from his analysis the cultural dimension. Ruskin's dictum "Tell me what you like and I'll tell you what you are" remains profoundly true. Films both reflect and validate cultural values and social norms, but cinema-goers have the ultimate power in their own hands. They make or break films by going to them or staying away. The box office never lies: all the publicity in the world cannot make a film a success in the face of public indifference. It is a commonplace that today's cinema-goers are on the whole teenagers. What are they going to see? Does what they like give us a clue about what they are?

ALAS, A VERY IMPORTANT STRAND in current cinema is the glamorisation of barbarism. The patron saints of the new barbarism are Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose recurrent portrayals of

monosyllabic, musclebound Neanderthals have captured the imagination of this generation of cinema-goers. Schwarzenegger, the former "Mr Universe", starred in the highly successful *Conan the Barbarian*. Prefaced by a quote from Nietzsche—"What does not kill me makes me stronger"—it depicted Conan's destruction of a hippy-like snake-worshipping cult with heavy emphasis on bone-crunching violence, bloodbaths, and savagery. Conan's philosophy was to "crush your enemies, see them driven before you and hear the lamentations of their women"; the film extolled a code based on sexual gratification and violence, the antithesis of the chivalry and purity of the Arthurian romances which had dominated the literature and culture of the 19th century. The success of the film prompted two sequels (*Conan the Destroyer* and *Red Sonja*), and a host of imitations.

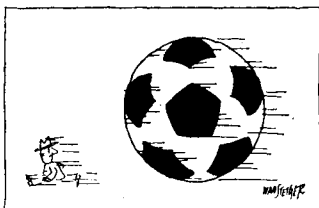
Stallone also starred in *Rocky*, *Rocky II*, *Rocky III* and *Rocky IV*, slick and very obvious combinations of Hollywood schmaltz and macho violence, each out-grossing the one before. Essentially it is the same film made four times, proving the old adage that nothing succeeds like excess. The story of a no-hoper who becomes world champion boxer, it is

also the apotheosis of the thicken as hero. He is inarticulate and semi-literate. He cannot get a job because he has no qualifications. All he can do is box. When in *Rocky II* his wife asks him to give up boxing, he replies—in the key line of the series: "I never asked you to stop being a woman—don't ask me to stop being a man." Being a man, therefore, is defined as the ability to knock seven bells out of someone, the cinematic equivalent of "handling yourself"—the quality of self-contained toughness so admired by the football hooligan. All the films culminate in extended sequences of graphic violence, some of it in slow motion, as Rocky batters his opponent to a pulp, urged on by a blood-lusting crowd. The films seek to mitigate the violence by stressing Rocky's dog-like devotion to his wife and his devout Catholicism. (In *Rocky II*, he even gets a priest to bless the fight. Sadly, the priest did not think to remind him that it is the meek who shall inherit the earth.)

Rocky IV took on a global connotation, with Rocky challenging and defeating the brutal Russian boxer Drago who has killed Rocky's friend in the ring. Rocky trains for the fight by running up mountains and chopping down trees

The Hard Stuff

THE ENGLISH national football side played on the Continent last week for the first time since the Heysel tragedy. English fans were begged not to go to Stockholm. Inevitably, they did. "Sunday Times" reporter Chris Lightbown, a veteran of the stadium terraces in the '70s, joined them. He thought he was unshockable. He was wrong.



AFTER THE GAME in Stockholm I watched several hundred England fans move briskly out of the stadium, and turn in a silent mass against the flow of Swedish spectators. Under bright arc lights at the Swedish end of the ground they

stopped, briefly seethed in a mass, grunted and charged. It had begun again.

The English tore into the Swedes with a viciousness made sicker by the youth of the Swedes. Kicks, punches and head-butts were followed by stones, and, allegedly, knives. But after charge and counter-charge, the young Swedish fans had put the battle-hardened English to flight. Being run in Sweden will linger long and hard on the circuit back home, and revenge will inevitably be taken, however many years pass until the two countries play again.

STOCKHOLM, capital of the sex paradise, has, it emerges, no red light district. Fans were stunned. Wrapped in Union Jacks, they sat in cafés, ordering drinks, throwing in jibes and sexual innuendos. They were left nonplussed by the Swedes' indifference.

THE ATMOSPHERE was unlike anything I had known in ten years of watching football from the hardest terraces in England. Humour was absent. Racist remarks were commonplace, and all-pervasive. In front of me, two Midlands fans gave the Nazi salute throughout our national anthem. They weren't joking. More, no one found them remarkable. Worse, they were unembarrassed and stared hard at my shock. The viciousness I had known on the terraces was the viciousness of immaturity, born of desperation to get a

name at any price. This was viciousness through and through.

AS DARKNESS FELL and the scrappy game spat on, talk of the Hard Stuff resumed—the Hard Stuff, that cocktail of battle, drink, and manly experience that English kids so pursue. Where were all those dirty book shops? When did the pubs shut?

THE ENGLISH WERE stunned at the fighting ferocity of the Swedes. True, they enjoyed a 3-1 advantage in numbers, but the Hard Stuff is meant to flow best when backs are against the wall. The triumphant Swedes, now several thousand strong, poured into the underground, rolling chants, invariably Anglicised, off the vaulted ceilings. About 30 English fans, the cream of the Hard Stuff, stood cordoned off by riot police, at the back of the platform. Coolly, precisely, the police marshalled both sets of fans on to the train, keeping them apart.

I TOLD SOME Swedish kids I had heard of "The Black Army". They were delighted, but my knowledge paled beside theirs of the English scene. Had West Ham's "Inter City Firm" been there, they asked? How many were Leeds currently taking away? Who did I think would win the fight at Millwall v. Leeds on November 8? Millwall, observed someone, was really hard to find if you did not know that particular part of London. Would I like to meet the guy who goes to Leeds every other Saturday?

AND OFF WE WENT, drinking, talking, exchanging tales of the Hard Stuff deep into the night. They lauded "The Black Army", trashed foreigners, blacks, gays, police. But as they spoke of their hate for gays, they left inviolate several obviously gay men standing next to them on the train.

Their venom draws from adolescence, fast-bred in boredom, and takes shape from occasional experiences, like contact with Turkish immigrants, "different type of people". But currently, it remains more cloak than dagger.

Where will it all end?

Chris Lightbown

in THE SUNDAY TIMES (London)

in true Yankee frontier spirit; Drago uses computerised equipment and chemical stimulants. In the end Rocky wins, in front of a fanatically anti-American crowd and members of the Politburo in Moscow, thus demonstrating the essential bankruptcy of the Communist system. There may be a little homily about the need for international understanding at the end, but the imagery throughout is of the smashing of the hated Russky. This is what grabs the youthful audience: not the occasional simple-minded philosophical exchange, as is evidenced by a chilling report of a young video-conditioned American audience chanting "*Fast forward—Fast forward!*" during the talk passages, anxious to get on to the next episode of blood-letting.⁶

Perhaps the most notable case of *macho* mindlessness, also starring Stallone, is *Rambo*—the supreme example of the comic-strip movie, the film of action rather than ideas, of one-dimensional characters, minimal dialogue, and vivid primal imagery. "Supertrooper versus the Red Menace and the Yellow Peril" puts the plot in a nutshell, as Rambo, "pure fighting machine, with no fear, no regrets", is parachuted into Viet Nam in search of American POWs. Its appeal is very basic; indeed, with its well-handled, almost non-stop action scenes and its horrific torture sequence in which a sadistic Russian mutilates our hero, it would have made an acceptable World War Two propaganda movie—lone US operator in enemy territory, pitted against the Germans and the Japs. The principal difference is that we are not currently at war, and stirring up hatred against the sinister yellow Vietnamese Communists and their vicious Russian allies would seem somewhat *de trop*.

Unlike World War Two films, however, *Rambo* suggests that the US authorities are almost as bad as the enemy. They betrayed the American veterans once before, and now they are doing so again. But when his Commanding Officer tells Rambo "Don't hate your country", he replies: "All I want is for our country to love us as much as we love it." This sentiment provoked titters of disbelief in the cinema in which I saw the film—largely, I suspect, because patriotism had not figured noticeably in the film any more than international understanding had in *Rocky IV*. To drag it in as a tag-line seemed implausible.

The audience was right. The film is a hymn to the survival of the fittest—nihilistic, atavistic, anarchistic. Rambo strips off his clothes and reverts to half-naked savagery, like a cross between Tarzan the apeman and Conan the barbarian. *Rambo*, like *Conan*, is an exaltation of pre-urban, pre-civilisation, barbarian man.

AND HERE THE DANGER LIES. The film assaults the viewer with a succession of images of raw *macho* power. It opens with an explosion and a long-shot of half-naked convicts, wielding picks and power-drills against the solid rock. The camera pans up Stallone from his heavy boots to his unshaven face, and we are off into non-stop action. Boots crunch into groins, knives slice into flesh, arrows thud

into chests, necks are snapped, machine-guns rip people and vehicles apart. Throughout, the camera lovingly caresses Stallone's gleaming musculature and fierce arsenal of weapons. At the end, Rambo completes his rejection of modern civilisation when with a roar of primal hatred he machine-guns a room-full of modern computer technology. Hatred, indeed, is the central emotion of the film: hatred of the Russians, hatred of the Vietnamese, hatred of the American authorities, hatred of the 20th century. The film is the triumphal anthem of the new brutality. *Rambo*, itself a sequel to *First Blood*, was certain to spawn further sequels; and *Rambo II* is now with us.

British newspapers promoted the Rambo cult with unholy glee, inscribing it indelibly in the popular consciousness. But it also appealed to its audience, breaking all box-office records in the United Kingdom. Rambo headbands appeared. Rambo cross-bows were offered for sale. Leading sportsmen (Jan Molby, Ian Botham, Norman Whiteside) were immediately dubbed "Rambo". So too were politicians: Michael Heseltine, Neil Kinnock, and most notably, of course, Ronald Reagan, who had jokingly called on Rambo for help during the Beirut hijack crisis. Day after day the *Sun* newspaper, the principal organ of working-class populism, promoted the cult, running a Rambo "look-alike" competition, a "Get-Fit-Like-Rambo" course, and an offer of Rambo hats. At the same time, the paper reported the effects of the cult. "RAMBOS IN CINEMA RAMPAGE" reported 50 youths smashing into a cinema in Gloucester to see the film, and fighting a pitched battle with the police who were attempting to eject them. An Acton man was fined by magistrates for damaging a pub's pool table while drunkenly demonstrating his Rambo act. From outside a Taunton cinema three drunken marines stole a four-foot-high model helicopter advertising *Rambo*, and paraded it through the town. Children in East London schools were reported to be playing Rambo games in their playgrounds. And so on and so on, until interest eventually petered out with the announcement of "Gnomebo", the creation of Rambo garden gnomes.

RAMBO AND ROCKY and their ilk are the mere tip of a vast iceberg. Their attitudes and world-view are shared by the latest Tarzan (*Greystoke*), the *Mad Max* series (bikers battling it out in the wasteland of post-World-War-Three Australia), and endless cheap imitations. What they have in common is a rejection of civilisation as decadent and corrupt, a return to primitive savagery, the glorification of violence, an emphasis on fighting as the definition of masculinity, the rejection of chivalry, the triumph of the individual will. They are enormously popular, providing role models and codes for life, and their popularity shows no sign of abating.

It is disheartening to see the United States, which since Britain's demise is the West's imperial power, devoting so much talent and energy to the glorification of barbarism. When Britain had an empire, its regularly adduced analogue was an idealised image of the Roman Empire (*Pax Britannica*; *civis Britannicus sum*; the proconsuls; classical architecture for colonial buildings; the paintings of Alma-

⁶ *The Guardian*, 6 February 1986.

Tadema).⁷ But Britain, which rejoiced in its empire, ceased to be a world power after World War Two. America, on the other hand, is a reluctant imperial power. Culturally it has always identified with the victims of imperialism, which is why in almost all of Hollywood's ancient and biblical epics of the 1950s and '60s, the Romans and Egyptians were played by British actors, and the Hebrews, the rebels, and the slaves by Americans.⁸

THE NEW CULT OF BARBARISM EVOKES muscle without morals. One is forcibly reminded of Thomas Hughes's distinction (in *Tom Brown at Oxford*) between musclemen and the exponents of his own school of "muscular Christianity":

"The 'musclemen' seems to have no belief whatever as to the purposes for which his body has been given him, except some hazy idea that it is to go up and down the world with him, belabouring men and captivating women for his benefit or pleasure, at once the servant and fomentor of those fierce and brutal passions, which he seems to think it a necessity, and rather a fine thing than otherwise, to indulge and obey. Whereas, so far as I know, the least of the muscular Christians has hold of the old chivalrous and Christian belief that a man's body is given him to be trained and brought into subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, the advancement of all righteous causes and the subduing of the earth which God has given to children of men. . . ."

There is nothing of chivalry or muscular Christianity in the cinema's new breed of musclemen. A film which Thomas Hughes would probably have heartily endorsed—Clint Eastwood's admirable *Pale Rider*, which showed a two-fisted preacher-gunfighter saving a small community from a tyrannical local boss—never had *Rambo*'s box-office success. It ought perhaps to give the purveyors of the new barbarism pause for thought that the last régime to glorify in its sculpture, books and plays the half-naked musclemen, tribal violence against a decadent civilisation, and the triumph of the will was the Third Reich. In Britain, the identification of football hooliganism with the National Front confirms the association of ideas.

James Walvin adduces no solution to the collapse of codes of discipline and the social ills attending what he clearly sees as Britain's decline. If there is any hope, it can only lie in education. Is it mere coincidence that the upsurge of cultural barbarism has been accompanied by a disastrous decline in the education system (a decline which according to all available indicators has left Britain one of the most poorly educated countries in Western Europe)? A National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers

report shows that verbal abuse of teachers, vandalising of their property, and even physical violence are regular occurrences in our schools: 1 in 25 teachers has suffered physical violence at least once, and often more than once. Even at home, teachers have suffered from obscene telephone calls and damage to property. Despite this, we have a situation in which one local education committee actually reinstated pupils expelled from a school for writing obscene and racist graffiti about their teachers on the school walls. The 1985 report of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools makes dismal reading. A third of all classes are badly taught. The majority of school buildings are dilapidated and decaying. Schools are chronically short of resources; 80% of children have to share basic textbooks. Morale in the teaching profession is at rock-bottom. And the situation is no better in universities. Weakened, cut back, and demoralised, they are confronted by yet more reductions in annual grant, a situation which could lead (according to the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals) to several universities going bankrupt by the 1990s.

Money is desperately needed to build and repair school premises, buy books and equipment, and train teachers. Money is needed to restore the funding of universities and polytechnics. But, along with investment, the *philosophy* of education in this country needs radical attention. There is no point in creating an education solely devoted to useful skills, like computer technology, engineering drawing, and practical accountancy—which appears to be the present aim—when children emerge from our schools devoid of the values and virtues of civilisation and civilised behaviour. As Clive Bell wrote:

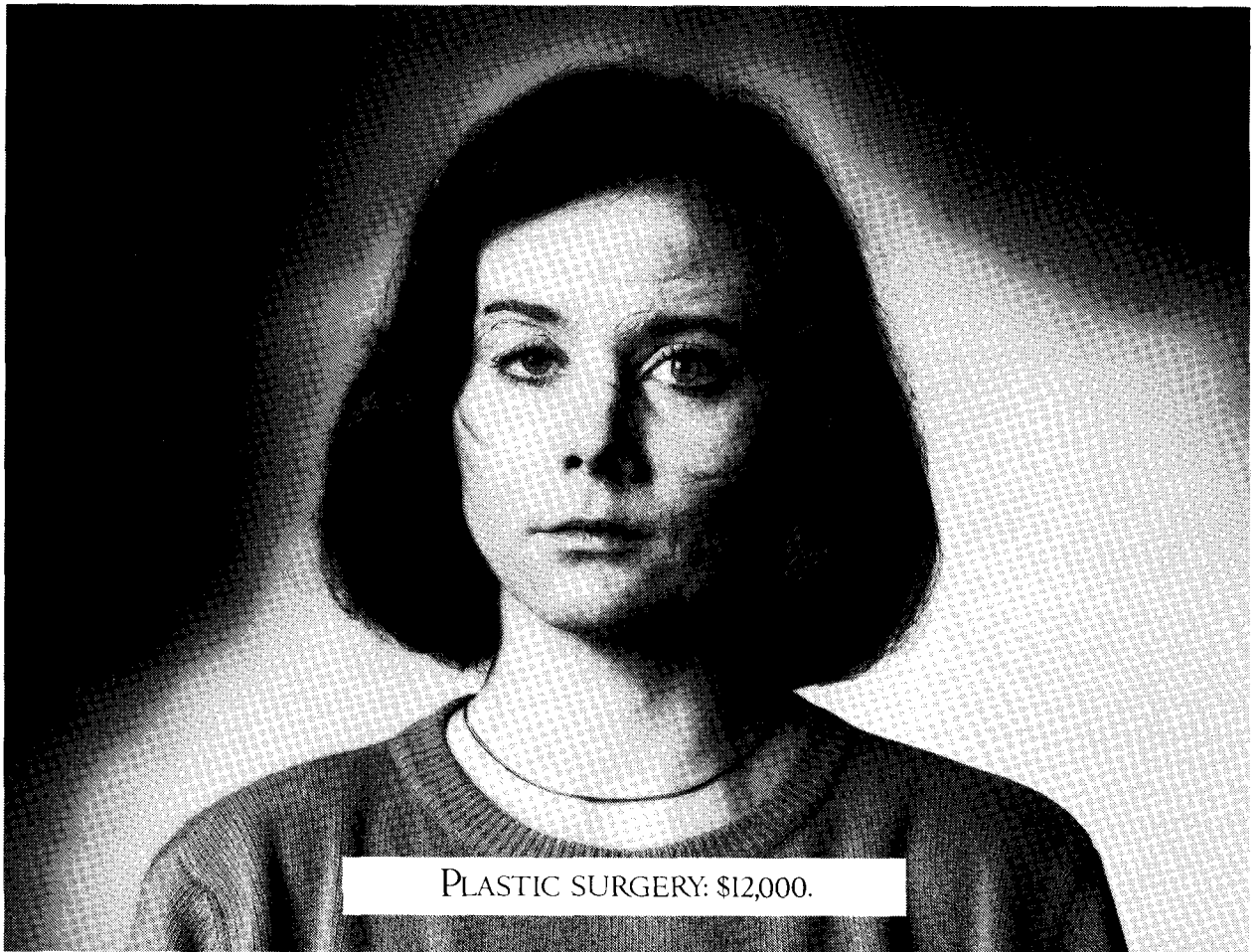
"From a sense of values comes that desire for, and belief in, liberal education which no civilised age has been without. . . . The civilized man . . . cultivates his powers of thinking and feeling, pursues truth and acquires knowledge, not for any practical value that these may possess but for themselves or . . . for their power of revealing the rich and complex possibilities of life. . . . The savage who begins to criticise intellectually the customs and conventions of his tribe soon ceases to exist or ceases to be a savage: he has taken a long step towards civilisation."⁹

"The civilised man is made, not born", says Bell; and he can be made by education. Self-discipline and intellectual expansion must lie at the heart of this education; and if our schools and universities, properly funded and organised, are not in the vanguard of the onslaught on ignorance, prejudice and barbarism, the future will lie in the hands of savages. Walvin warns us that: "Modern British society has never before confronted the alarming prospect that great swathes of its young urban people are growing into adult life not merely without work but—perhaps more worrying still—devoid of the disciplines so vital to maintaining harmony and social stability. . . ." Clive Bell consciously echoes Matthew Arnold in his discussion of civilisation, and it is the title of Matthew Arnold's most celebrated treatise that provides us with the stark alternatives. Given the present state of British society, those alternatives are indeed culture or anarchy.

⁷ For a crisp and lucid account of Britain's decline from world-power status, see *World Crisis and British Decline 1929-56*. By ROY DOUGLAS. Macmillan Press, £25.00, paper £8.95.

⁸ See Derek Elley, *The Epic Film* (Routledge, 1984).

⁹ Clive Bell, *Civilization* (Penguin ed., 1947), pp. 65, 44.



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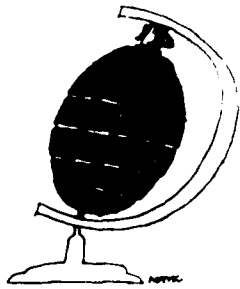
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Political Terror in the Muslim World



THERE IS A prevalent (and justifiable) impression that an appreciable part of terrorist activities today originate, and frequently take place, in the world of Islam, and particularly in its Arab portion. The Western public has become acutely aware of these activities owing to the electronic media and their ability speedily to report terrorist outrages in a graphic and striking manner. But the fact that political terrorism originating in the Muslim and Arab world is constantly in the headlines must not obscure the perhaps more significant fact that this terrorism has an old history. More significant, because this old history will serve to account for, and in great measure to explain, the recourse to political terrorism today, it will be seen to be more than simply a passing contemporary phenomenon. For it is, on the contrary, a phenomenon by no means easy to eradicate.

Jurists have made lucid and necessary distinctions which enable us to distinguish terrorism from, say, "guerrilla warfare", or what Clausewitz called the *petite guerre*. For our present purposes, if terrorism can be cursorily described as "intimidation through thuggery", then much of modern political terrorism may be described as ideological thuggery. In other words, when terrorism is political it is very often the case that the terrorist is moved by a political ideal which he wants to realise. Its realisation is thought to be brought nearer by, and thus a justification of, the use of terrorist methods.

The *locus classicus* of such a doctrine may be found in Bakunin's and Nechaev's famous *Revolutionary Catechism* (1869), while the terrorists' state of mind and the dialectic leading from idealistic fervour to actual murder are powerfully conveyed in works such as Dostoevsky's *The Possessed* (1871) and Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907) and *Under Western Eyes* (1911).

Though political terrorism in Islam has not produced documents quite like the *Revolutionary Catechism* or imaginative evocations of the terrorists' world like Conrad's or Dostoevsky's, yet there can be no doubt that the ideological impulse is just as present and just as ruthless in the case of Islam as in that of Europe.

The first political assassination to take place in Islam is, I suppose, that of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet who became the fourth Caliph. He was murdered in the year of 661 (of the Christian era) by a member of a group of his former supporters who came to believe that Ali was following a policy at variance with the word of God. Much better known, of course, much more formidable and longer lasting in their terrorist activities, were the so-called "Assassins", an off-shoot of the Isma'ili Shi'ites who established the Fatimid Caliphate in Cairo in 969.

The Assassins were votaries of a religion which held that the only legitimate ruler of the Muslims, the Imam, was the descendant of Isma'il (himself seventh in the line of succession from the Imam Ali), in their eyes the sole legitimate legatee of the Prophet. Under the impulsion of a leader of genius, Hasan-i Sabbah (d. 1124), who may be considered as a foremost exponent of the theory and practice of terrorism,¹ comparatively small groups of Isma'ilis in Eastern Persia and Syria adopted and perfected assassination as a weapon against Sunni rulers and their officials, as well as against Crusader leaders. Of the murder of the well-known Seljuq vizir, Nizam al-Mulk, in 1092, Hasan-i Sabbah is declared in an Isma'ili account to have said that "the killing of this devil is the beginning of bliss".

The followers of Hasan-i Sabbah also held that terrorism was an efficient weapon because, as an Isma'ili writer put it:

"by one single warrior on foot a king may be stricken with terror, though he own more than a hundred thousand horsemen."

Such belief in the efficacy of terrorism held a certain plausibility for Hasan-i Sabbah and his followers because of the character of the states against which they pitted themselves. These were centralised despotisms in which (to adopt Hegel's description of Oriental realms) one man alone was free. To do away with this man and, possibly, with his immediate entourage, seemed to offer an easy way of toppling a régime, even perhaps of destroying a state. This condition of centralised despotism has, by and large, continued to characterise the world of Islam where the gap between ruler and ruled has, if anything, increased in modern times, and where one finds a noticeable lack of political institutions which may serve to articulate the body politic and give it strength and resilience.

¹ See Bernard Lewis, *The Assassins* (1967).

But, in the end, the Assassins failed. However many rulers and their servants they managed to murder, they could not possibly prevail against the organised military power, resting on an extensive territorial base, of the rulers whom they challenged. In this respect, what is true of the Assassins would, I think, also generally hold true of terrorism in the modern world, the world of Islam included.

The assassins sent out by Hasan-i Sabbah and his lieutenants were known as *fida'is* or *fidawis*, i.e. those who offer themselves up in sacrifice for the sake of their cause. The expression, as well as the phenomenon, has survived. It has come to be used by the terrorists who have emerged in another Shi'ite society—that of the Twelver Shi'ites, i.e. those Shi'ites who believe that the legitimate ruler of the Muslims is the twelfth descendant of Ali, who disappeared in about 873. This Imam, now hidden, will reappear in his own good time, and when he does so will be recognised as the Mahdi, the rightly-guided one, the Master of the Hour, Living Proof and bringer of Resurrection.

In Twelver Shi'ism, therefore, there is what might be called a built-in Messianism. This Messianism has usually encouraged political passivity, but it can also fuel political activism of an extreme kind, and lead to terrorist acts, as with the Assassins. The activities in Iran this century (from the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s) of the Fedayan-i Islam led by a cleric who called himself Nawab Safevi are a case in point. Among the murders for which the Fedayan were responsible was that of the Prime Minister, Razmara, and of a well-known writer, Kasravi, who held anti-Islamic views. The same Messianic radicalism and the same readiness for self-sacrifice mark those Iranian devotees of Ayatollah Khomeini (the Imam, as they call him) harboured by Syria, who are thought to have been responsible for the suicidal attacks in 1983 on the US Embassy in Beirut, and on US, French and Israeli bases in Beirut and Tyre, as well as those Shi'ites who, during the same year, attacked the US Embassy and other public buildings in Kuwait.

Beliefs and political attitudes within Shi'ism in its different varieties account, then, for a tendency to resort to terrorist action, and for what might be called a terrorist mentality—a tendency manifest in the past, and present today. The Isma'ilis organised their activities from the safety of fortified castles dominating a comparatively exiguous hinterland. After the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran, terrorism came to enjoy a sanctuary considerably less vulnerable and facilities much more extensive than Hasan-i Sabbah could have dreamed of. Khomeini's Iran thus exemplifies the idea of a "terrorist state"—a state which, as a matter of course, organises and supports terrorist activities against foreign individuals and groups whom, for one reason or another, it desires to eliminate or intimidate. Of this now useful, albeit ghastly, concept the evidence shows that the USSR, Syria, Libya and Iraq offer further exemplifications.

attitudes have a prominent strand of Messianic activism and violence—of what I have called ideological thuggery. This feature became part of the world-wide market of ideas—a market which itself was a European creation—and eventually passed, of course with much else, into the world of Islam.

One of the earliest figures associated with terrorism, in theory and practice, was the well-known Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-97) whose activities ranged over a large part of the Muslim world. Afghani was a Shi'ite, and his thought is a strange amalgam of Western and Eastern notions. He certainly believed in assassination. While in Egypt, in the late 1870s, together with his disciple Muhammad Abduh (later Mufti of Egypt), he plotted the assassination of the Khedive Isma'il. This plot came to nothing, but some two decades later, while at Constantinople, Afghani successfully encompassed the murder of Nasir al-Din Shah. The simple-minded murderer whom he despatched to Tehran to do the deed, once caught and interrogated, gave expression to ideas partly European, partly Shi'ite, which unmistakably carried the stamp of Afghani's inspiration. He referred to the bloodshed which accompanied the French Revolution as his justification for killing the tyrant, and he avowed the belief that Afghani was the Mahdi, the rightly-guided one who will manifest himself at the end of time to rid the earth of injustice, and fill it with justice.

A more purely European provenance is usual in terrorist movements and activities in the world of Islam during this century. This is the case with Wardany, a French-educated Muslim pharmacist who murdered the Coptic Prime Minister of Egypt, Butros Ghali, in 1910 and who, awaiting execution in his prison cell, was busy reading Bagehot's *British Constitution* and Rousseau's *Social Contract*, and sketching a political treatise to deal with the constitution of a future Islamic government.

In the second and third decades of this century Egypt also saw a proliferation of secret terrorist groups connected with nationalist parties, and particularly with the Wafd, who believed that the murder of British officials would do away with British dominance and inaugurate a new heaven and a new earth. Nasser, as he tells us in his *Philosophy of the Revolution* (1959), was himself attracted as a young man by the lure, the excitement, and the romanticism of terrorist murder. So was his successor as President of Egypt, Anwar al-Sadat, who at the end of World War II was implicated in a political assassination.

In Algeria, again, in the 1940s and early '50s, Messali al-Hadj's overt political party had a secret "Special Organisation" attached to it, the function of which was to engage in terrorism. Messali began his career as a Communist organiser among Algerian workers in France. Many members of his "Special Organisation" were later to form the leadership of the FLN—itself in many ways very much a terrorist organisation.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation is the best-known body in the Muslim world to derive its doctrine and practice from a European model. The PLO came into prominence after the Six Day War, when the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were conquered by Israel. Its doctrine then was that its guerrillas would challenge the Israeli army in the conquered

TERRORISM IN THE WORLD OF ISLAM has other roots which are not indigenous, which in fact come from Europe. Modern European political thought and

territories, these guerrillas being sheltered by (and finding cover among) the sympathising local populations. The PLO would, thus, be applying the tactics enunciated and put into practice by the Chinese and Vietnamese Communists. They would circulate in the occupied territories “like fish in water”. This strategy was speedily shown to be a failure; and guerrilla action was replaced by terrorist activity properly speaking, against Israeli, Arab, and foreign civilian targets. This has perforce remained the dominant strategy of the PLO, any attempt to transform it into a regular military force or peoples’ militia having so far failed, as has indeed the strictly terrorist strategy also.

OTHER GROUPS in the world of Islam have practised terrorism as a matter of European-inspired doctrine and strategy.

The Armenian Dashnaks and Hinchaks in the Ottoman Empire, who were active especially during the 1890s, derived their doctrines from Western ideologies, and they followed the example of various revolutionary groups in Czarist Russia. Again, Armenian terrorism against Turkish targets, in emulation of the Left-wing terrorist groups in Germany and Italy who have been active in the last two decades, has reappeared—encouraged perhaps by the Soviets, and certainly helped by the PLO, with whom Armenian organisations have established links in the Lebanon.

Both Left-wing and Right-wing terrorism appeared in Turkey in the 1970s, inspired by Marxist or Nationalist ideologies, and most probably clandestinely armed and supported by the Soviet bloc. The Turkish civilian governments in power during that decade proved powerless to check and arrest their activities. The military régime, however, which took over in 1980, succeeded in suppressing them. The most notorious exploit to be accomplished by these groups was the attempted murder of the Pope by Mehmet Ali Agça, who is alleged to have been sent on his mission by the Bulgarian Secret Service.

In Iran, again, various Left-wing terrorist groups, whom the Shah’s régime collectively described as “Islamic Marxists”, took part in the movement which led to the downfall of this régime, only to be ruthlessly hunted and destroyed by Khomeini’s régime, which had been a beneficiary of their activities.

WE HAVE, FINALLY, TO CONSIDER a third group of terrorists in the world of Islam, who have been extremely active over the last few years. Their inspiration is different from that of the first two groups considered so far. These are the terrorists connected with, or stemming from, the movement of the Muslim Brethren which Hasan al-Banna formed in Egypt in the late 1920s. The movement originally aimed at the regeneration of Islam in Egyptian society—a society corrupted and pulverised through European domination and the influence of godless European ideas. By a natural dialectic this regeneration came to be seen as involving nothing less than making the Koran itself the

Constitution of Egypt—as the slogan of the Brethren has it, “Islam our banner, and the Koran our constitution.” It is for this reason that the movement of the Brethren is rightly described as “fundamentalist”, in the sense that it preaches a return to the fundamentals of Islam, as these are supposed to have been in the time of the Prophet and of the first four, Rightly-Guided, Caliphs.

To pursue such an ideal was, then, necessarily to be involved in politics; and Banna’s movement, from being concerned solely with social welfare and purely religious teaching, came increasingly to aspire to a political role. By the outbreak of World War II, the Brethren had become a political force to be reckoned with in Egypt, and Banna an important political personage able to mobilise and organise large numbers of followers. In order to realise the goals of his movement, Banna created and controlled a secret “Special Apparatus” which was used for clandestine activities, including assassinations. These activities must have considerably alarmed the authorities, and Banna was assassinated in 1949 (it is said on the orders of King Faruq).

The military régime which replaced the monarchy in 1952 seemed at first well-disposed to the Brethren, who may even have hoped that their programme would actually be realised under the auspices of the so-called “Free Officers”, many of whom (including Nasser and Sadat) had had dealings with Banna and his lieutenants, and seemed sympathetic to their aims. But it was not long before the military régime and the Brethren were in conflict. When, in 1954, an attempt was made to assassinate Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Brethren were held responsible. The movement was suppressed and driven underground, and many of its leaders were executed or imprisoned. Among them was one of the ablest of the Brethren, Sayyid Qutb, who was to remain in prison, apart from a short interval, between 1954 and 1966 when he was in turn condemned to death and executed. What brought about such harsh treatment was the publication in 1965 of a short book by Sayyid Qutb, *Signposts on the Road*, which the military régime considered so subversive and dangerous that it was moved to publish a rejoinder, *Signposts on the Road to Treason and Reaction*.

Signposts on the Road taught that sovereignty belonged only to God, and that the existing rulers of Muslims, by disregarding this divine truth, and by claiming to exercise a merely terrestrial sovereignty, proved themselves to be unbelievers and usurping tyrants. With such rulers the Muslims could in no way compromise, and to them no obedience was due. This clear-cut and categorical doctrine seems to have been the inspiration of a number of terrorist activities of which Egypt has been the scene during the last decade—activities all based on the premise that the actual ruler of Egypt possessed no legitimacy, and that it was mandatory to kill him.

The year 1974 saw a conspiracy to kill President Anwar Sadat, organised by a Palestinian, Salih Sirriya, who was caught and executed. There followed, in 1977, another terrorist outrage perpetrated against a man of religion who was Minister of Pious Foundations. This was organised by an Egyptian, Shukri Mustafa, who had been a member of the Brethren, and who formed a group of Muslims, popularly

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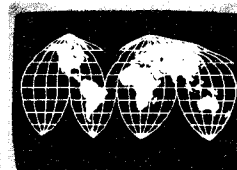
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known as the Group of Excommunication and Withdrawal. (Shukri preached the withdrawal of the faithful, i.e. his followers, from the general Islamic society, which he anathematised as one of unbelief, *kufr*—hence the appellation of his group.) Following the murder of the Minister, al-Shaykh al-Dhahabi, Shukri was caught and executed. Lastly, there was the *Jihad* or Holy War Group, from whom Sadat's assassin was to emerge, and who were inspired by an electrician, Abd al-Salam Faraj, author of an opusculé, *The Hidden Duty*. The duty in question—which for the author was, though hidden, as much a pillar of Islam as the other publicly acknowledged obligations—was that of killing the Muslim ruler who compromised with unbelievers and unbelief.

Sadat was one such. This conviction, together with resentment at the arrest of a brother on suspicion of involvement in Islamic extremism, led the twenty-four-year-old Lieutenant Khalid al-Islambuli to organise Sadat's murder on 6 October 1981, at the military review commemorating the eighth anniversary of the outbreak of the Yom Kipur War, and the successful Egyptian crossing of the Canal.

Having done the deed, Islambuli identified himself and declared that he had just killed Pharaoh.

THE MUSLIM BRETHREN IN SYRIA have, likewise, engaged in terrorist activities. Their target is the Ba'thist régime which, in their eyes, is doubly reprehensible. Ba'thist doctrine is secularist, and for nearly two decades now the Ba'thist Party and régime have been controlled by a faction of Alawites—in Sunni eyes heretics beyond the pale. The Brethren have organised the murder of numerous Ba'thist officials and officers.

One of the most notorious of their exploits was the murder in 1979 of 83 Alawite cadets at the Artillery School in Aleppo. In 1980, an unsuccessful attempt was made on

President Assad's life. In retaliation a large number of Brethren interned in a concentration camp were exterminated in cold blood. In Aleppo in 1980, and again in Hama in 1981, forces of the régime descended on Sunni quarters, killing indiscriminately in an attempt to terrorise the population and dissuade it from offering shelter and help to the Brethren. The official terror was not efficacious enough. An insurrection broke out in February 1982 in Hama, leading the régime to bomb the city from the air, and to raze a large part of it, indiscriminately killing thousands of citizens in the process.

A conspiratorial and terrorist movement thus met its match in a régime equally conspiratorial and terroristic. Syria under the Ba'th was then, in yet a different sense, a terrorist state in that (like Germany under Hitler, and the Soviet Union most conspicuously under Stalin) it totally brushed aside legality in its dealings with its citizens.

WHATEVER ITS ORIGINS and inspiration, whether it is Mahdist zeal in Shi'ism, or ideological fervour instilled by European activist ideologies, or the desire to extirpate corruption and restore a pristine purity imagined to mark the Prophetic era, terrorism in modern Islam is unlikely to prove a flash in the pan. It is one manifestation of the deep dislocation suffered by Islamic society in modern times, and attests to the widespread belief in the promise and efficacy of violent political action—a belief derived in equal measure from European ideologies and from bellicosity *vis-à-vis* the Unbeliever and the Heretic which is a feature of traditional Islam. It also underlines the simultaneous prevalence of Muslim régimes which, issuing from conspiracies and *coups d'état*, are devoid of legitimacy. It is not easy or practicable to discriminate between intra- and inter-state terrorism in the world of Islam since, however defined, the goals of the terrorists usually transcend the boundaries of the state as usually recognised.

Fragility

Each day the chignonned women gather
On the train; their skin is drawn so tight
The veins pulse blue as painter's ink
Tracing fragility. They bend their heads together
Like birds and then revert to stillness.
Around them, the other travellers make space,
Raising occasionally a languid eye whose look
Founders on their cool bones and passes on.
They carry, without heeding, balance
Into other halls that we know nothing of
And spend themselves till evening on exercises
To lend and learn grace. They should be inviolate:
Their faces are like china—a leaf, a cherry blossom
Would break them. They chatter unknowingly
While all around the underworld grows greater
Planning how he will win such delicacy
To his desires.

Hilary Davies

Albergo Terminal

THE ROOM WAS SMALL, dark, justly to be described as pokey, certainly the tiniest yet. A bed, a very small rickety-looking table, a wardrobe, a handbasin, a small window with a view of roofs. As usual lighting was poor, though there was a lamp on the bedside table, and it worked. He read a lot in bed and testing the bedside lamps was always one of the first things he did in any new room.

So, a big man in a heavy winter coat, he moved in, possessed the room, as he had possessed so many before, impermanently but (it seemed to him) absolutely. This time the journey had been brief and without strain—less than two hours in a slowish train from Rome, where he had left a suitcase. No need to rest, to lie down, thank heaven. His thoughts, constant, prolific, unceasing, were usually less morbid when his body was moving through streets, squares, buildings. He had read up Viterbo on the train, never having been here before. His first visit. An academic point, since surely he wouldn't be here again. Two days, conceivably three, and that was that. He would walk the streets, scrutinising walls, windows, doors of palazzi and public buildings, noticing fountains (Viterbo was said to have good fountains), appreciating vistas, entering the churches to look at paintings, frescoes, mosaics, statues, penetrating the obscure corners and secret places of the city. And in the evening, perhaps after a rest, he would hope to find the right kind of sympathetic and relaxed trattoria. Quite quickly he would get to know the layout of the town, the general design—main landmarks would become oddly familiar—and in his imagination he would take Viterbo too into his possession. You got what you wanted, or what there was to be got, out of a place, before moving on. But it wasn't like squeezing an orange, because *you* had no impact on *it*, you were merely a passive spectator, passer-by, wanderer, in the main inconspicuous.

He unpacked his small bag—toothbrush, pyjamas, sandals, a novel, a small flask of cognac—used the lavatory along the corridor, washed his face and hands, and strolled out into the street, guidebook in hand.

English towns may have certain old buildings (typically they will be ecclesiastical in nature) and even an old row or crescent (though much more likely to be 18th-century than medieval). But these buildings stand

out as curiosities in largely modern—or 19th-century settings. It seemed that so many Italian towns were old in their totality, and that this oldness was entirely or predominantly medieval. Here it is the motor car and scooter which are intrusive, anachronistic in reverse. The walled town of Viterbo certainly gave the impression of uniform age. Not beauty really. Decayed medieval tenements, in Naples, in Palermo, are hardly beautiful. But for the wanderer such buildings built up an overwhelming atmosphere. So at any rate it seemed to Hartman, as he walked toward the town centre, the Piazza del Plebiscito. (What plebiscite? What were they voting about? He ought to check up on that.) As regular and consistent as his exploration of artistic and architectural treasures was his self-questioning about these activities. Now as he found a café and sat down to drink his coffee and linger over it, he queried once more the whole business of immersing oneself in streets, quarters, cities of ancient buildings. Did it simply indicate a romantic escape? But what of the good citizens of Viterbo themselves? They couldn't all be romantic escapists. Except that many of them probably dreamed of an environment somewhat akin to Surbiton. Hartman dropped the question as he sipped his cappuccino, and thought instead, with a moderate defiance: I get pleasure from the shapes and designs and textures of these buildings and old quarters; nobody can ever completely explain why, or explain it away.

It was still morning (he had started early from Rome) and he spent the remaining part of the morning and the early afternoon looking at the town's principal monuments, around the main square where he had had his coffee, down Via San Lorenzo with a brief detour to look at the Palazzo Chigi and into the church of the Gesù. "In this church", said his guidebook, "in March 1271, Prince Henry of Cornwall, nephew of Henry III of England and son of Richard Plantagenet, King of the Romans, was murdered at the altar by Simon and Gui de Montfort in revenge for the death of their father Simon at the battle of Evesham in 1265." Who was Richard Plantagenet, King of the Romans? What had happened? Had Prince Henry fled to Viterbo from his pursuers, and in particular run into this church for sanctuary? People always seemed to be committing murder in church, in spite of the fact that it was almost

an ultimate taboo. Then as now, the ultimate taboo, or what one thought it was, constantly broken?

HE CONTINUED ON HIS WAY, passing through the Piazza della Morte (nice fountain) and over the bridge to the old square where the Duomo and the papal palace stood, the major buildings of Viterbo. Indeed, Pope Gregory X (and others later) was elected in this palace in 1271, which, Hartman suddenly realised, may well explain Prince Henry's presence. They'd all be there for that. A security problem. Like the Democrat Party Convention. In fact it had taken two years to decide on Gregory, and the captain of the people of Viterbo (what was his function exactly and how did he get chosen?) shut the electors in the palace and started to reduce the food supply to force them to come to a decision. A suggestive idea. He noticed another item in his book:

"John XXI died of injuries when the ceiling of the new wing collapsed on his head in 1277."

He managed to go round the cathedral before closing time (pubs in England, churches in Italy), noticing a few items of moderate interest, and slowly made his way back by a slightly different route to his small hotel near the city gates. He wasn't in the habit of eating lunch—a coffee, a snack, or as now nothing at all.

Well, not exactly nothing, as he found a tumbler by the washbasin and poured himself a small quantity of cognac. He took off shoes and trousers, and found his book. As usual, there was just one very thin pillow on the narrow single bed, but he found a second one in the wardrobe, and some more blankets, which he could use for further cushioning for the head. Now he was ready to get under the blanket—it was October, a grey dull day, not warm. He took a sip of cognac and looked round. Yes, this room surely was the bottom—one wouldn't be likely to find a smaller, pokier, darker and less basically equipped one than this. A prison cell could be worse, of course. That would depend *where*, and one might have to share—that was the great disadvantage. Privacy, solitariness, were essential, a *sine qua non* of his mode of existence. But he didn't demand much of his living quarters, even if he paradoxically sought pleasure in the grandest and most extraordinary of man's visual imaginings outside. One's needs were few, basic, though imperative. If he could manage here, he could surely survive. And quite often, after all, one got a surprisingly large room, a huge bed, a high ceiling, a much better view than this.

For he spent his life in this way now, moving from room to room in economical hotels in the countries of Europe, above all in Italy. Would he always go on like this, from town to town, a succession of views over roofs and into backyards of tenements? Always? Hardly the right word. He was now elderly rather than middle-aged, in his sixties, with, he suspected,

a doubtful heart. (Doctors not being part of his life-pattern, it was only suspicion—and experience.)

He had been an obscure civil servant for all those years, but the year had always burst into life when he took his holidays on the continent, travelling to the great art centres, seeing the great galleries and cathedrals. But time was always too short, there was always so much more to see, and now, alone, without "ties", he could both recapture those moments of holiday and continue to extend his knowledge and awareness.

And now his thoughts, as increasingly of late, raced ahead in different directions, making any concentration on reading unlikely. Would he collapse and die in such a room, a room in a grotty albergo or pensione in a small Italian or Spanish town, causing no end of complications and embarrassments for the proprietor? Logically, if he continued this mode of life (he only had a rented flat in London, no property of his own) and if his suspicions were right, such a fate was *there*; it was just a question of where and when—which *room*? What would it look like and what view if any would it have?

COULD ONE SAY that death was more varied, came in more various guises, than sex? Human beings, it seemed, in order to disguise the actual banality of the acts, built up great structures of fantasy and embroidery around sex. Death on the other hand came in many guises and settings despite man. The slaughter of Prince Henry of Cornwall, so dramatic and sacrilegious. One could imagine it as a Verdi set-piece, with all the main participants singing their lungs out. In fact, perhaps, only dramatic when looked back on afterwards. Maybe at the time it was as squalid and messy as any other violent death. How about John XXI, he on whom the ceiling of the papal palace collapsed? One of God's practical jokes? John wouldn't have been able to see the humour (that rather than wit, surely). Yet now, reading it in one's guidebook, who could resist a chuckle or at least a smirk?

His own death which he now foresaw, of a heart attack or stroke in a room like this one, would be appropriate in its obscurity, its lack of drama, its minor nuisance value, to his obscure and failed life. That last phrase itself was too dramatic, perhaps. He had not failed in any sensational manner; he had merely disappointed others and himself. His degree had been lower than expected, mainly because at that juncture he was unhappily and obsessively involved with a girl. Whenever he had been involved with a woman, he realised, it was obsessively and unhappily. He had gradually armoured himself against falling in love, but that was long after his marriage—his failed marriage, it would be called. He had decided that his life was not for sharing—he would share his life no more than he would share a room. He would keep it to himself. He had kept up with very few friends, though in his youth

he had “believed” in friendship, in personal relationships, in almost a Forsterian manner, and had had a close circle of intense friendships. He who had never had the arts of making and especially of keeping friends! In his prickliness he had lost most of them, and many had drifted off to work abroad, in the modern way. They were in the States or New Zealand or the Middle East. He had remained in his humble job. But for him the working side of life had no more real importance than the sleeping side—they were both necessary nuisances, sleep recharging the batteries and work recharging the bank account. Real life was elsewhere, in his leisure time, in his holidays, in his thoughts. From this point of view, the more routine the work the better. Yet the thought nagged him from time to time that there *was* failure somewhere, for after all he had once assumed that he would achieve something outside the sphere of his own dreaming and imagining mind. Well, far too late to think about all that now. The present was Viterbo, this room, this warming brandy.

HE AWOKE IN THE DARK, and for a few seconds thought it was early morning or the middle of the night, but realised then that he had had his fairly customary siesta and that it was now after six in the evening: life was absurdly brief, yet time lay on one's hands. With this mode of life, at any rate, there was an actual problem of utilising the hours of the day until it was time for dinner or some other regular event. It never took as long as one had set aside to see what was to be seen in the majority of towns, and in any case churches and museums had restricted hours of opening and one couldn't go on walking round towns the whole day. Mountaineers, country rambblers, cyclists, were better off there. Yet how bitterly one regretted the passing of years, the disappearance of decades, and here one was puzzling over how to fill in the time before dinner!

He read for half an hour or so, washed and dressed, and strolled out of the hotel with his book, as it was his habit to read over his restaurant dinner. One or two people were fixated on a television set in the sitting-room downstairs. He had earlier noted a couple of trattorias in his “own” narrow street. But first he looked for a bar for a pre-dinner drink, also required for reasons of timing rather than thirst, let alone alcoholism. Italians didn't in fact seem to drink much at all, except strange evil-looking medicinal-tasting liquors which they tossed off in one go while standing at the café bar. Everything very quick. Pronto. Standing room only. Quite difficult to find a café where one could sit in a relaxed and civilised manner, except ridiculously expensive ones like those on the Piazza San Marco in Venice. Did Italians do everything fast? They certainly drove fast enough, and with a kind of controlled theatricality. Did they make love rapidly? Standing up perhaps? He giggled as he walked, a juvenile sense of humour surfacing.

Afterwards he chose the trattoria on the other side of the road from his hotel—what was the point of exploring further? It seemed cheerful and welcoming, and certainly the large middle-aged woman who was in charge was also welcoming to him. While he was there, the place, which was pretty small, filled up. A jolly place with none of the self-consciousness of the London trattoria. Honest and generous country fare, the main course surprisingly vast in a country where it tended to take the form of a minuscule slice of veal sitting alone on a plate. He had made the mistake of starting with a pasta dish, a mountain on the plate, and soon felt slightly bloated, yet none the less at ease in this environment. He noticed that, as so often, the locals were drinking beer, while he the tourist had ordered his usual half-litre of red, and then he noticed another table, another single man, another wine carafe. Hartman frowned at the suspicion that the single man—somewhere in his thirties—was also English. Like himself, he was reading through his dinner, and this alone would probably mark him for an Englishman. Travellers, he thought, were divided into those who wanted nothing more than to meet fellow-countrymen (and/or women of course) and those who wanted nothing less. Hartman was firmly in the latter category, while being perfectly aware of its illogicality. To desire to be, as it were, the only tourist in the world. Tourism would be fine then. But it was deeper than this—the need to preserve his impermeable aloneness in the midst of the crowd—how better than as a wanderer in other people's countries? Other languages spoken around one which one didn't fully comprehend, and needn't listen to. One's own thoughts could continue unimpeded (or one's reading in a railway compartment, for example). Plenty of surface politeness, pleasantness, but no involvement. At this point he heard the other man talking to the waiter and his guess was confirmed. He returned to his book and the remainder of his meal, slightly troubled. When he eventually paid and left the restaurant, it was clear that he had been identified in the same way by the younger man.

He walked for a while, drank an Italian brandy and an espresso in a bar, and returned to the hotel. A larger group were fixated on the television screen. The novelty, it seemed, had never worn off in Italy. But somewhat to his surprise, what was coming from the set was undoubtedly opera. Well, so it should in Italy, but so often things didn't work out like that. He thought, from the costumes rather than from any immediate musical recognition, that it must be *An Italian Girl in Algiers*. The production side of it, however, was so poor—or possibly so “way-out”—that the whole thing had more the feeling of Gilbert and Sullivan or of a spoof, and after a while (apparently the entire work was being transmitted) he gave up and went upstairs to his room. As he did so, he noticed the Englishman he'd seen in the trattoria coming in the front door. So he too was staying here.

ON THE FOLLOWING MORNING he walked down again to the main square and again indulged in the luxury of sitting outside the only café which had such seating. It was a fine autumn morning in contrast to the previous day's greyness. He took out his guidebook and was beginning to check his route for the day when he noticed approaching the younger Englishman whom he had already encountered at the trattoria and the hotel. Their eyes met and contact was unavoidable without actual impoliteness.

"Good morning. You're English, aren't you?"

"Yes." And he gestured for the man to join him, noticing now the drawn, harried look. What on earth was he doing in Viterbo? Though the other might equally ask that of him, he supposed.

"I saw you in the restaurant last night—and we seem to be at the same hotel." At this the waiter arrived and the young man—clearly knowing virtually no Italian—negotiated his order for coffee.

"I'm sorry—Landon's the name—Giles Landon. Do you speak Italian?"

"Jeffrey Hartman. I can get by, just about. I'm no linguist, but I've travelled around Italy a great deal over the years. I love it, in autumn especially."

Landon looked at him as if slightly puzzled. Surely something more disturbing than usual had happened to him in the fairly recent past, to give him that haunted look?

"It's my first time in Italy", he said.

"And why Viterbo?"

Landon again looked surprised, as if he had never heard of the place, or hadn't realised he was there. Hartman felt a little guilty at cross-examining him, and decided not to ask any further questions.

"Oh, no special reason—just a short trip from Rome", the other stumbled.

"Have a look at the papal palace and the cathedral", Hartman advised, adopting a rather hearty tone and pointing in the general direction of those distinguished edifices. He of course would be moving in quite a different direction; he certainly had no idea of making a joint expedition with the fellow. Indeed, he now paid for his coffee and rose to leave. "See you."

"Yes." Hesitation. "Maybe at the restaurant tonight. Are you eating there again?"

Hartman groaned inwardly. He suspected the fellow to be working himself up to a great unburdening of whatever load he was carrying around Italy. "Probably, yes. May see you there then", and he took off, somewhat hurriedly.

His way took him in more or less an opposite direction to his route of yesterday, passing Santa Maria Nuova and indeed looking in, though the nicest thing about the church was the tiny pulpit outside, on the left of the façade, from which St Thomas Aquinas was said to have preached. He then plunged into the Contrada, a sheer medieval warren of narrow streets. At the conscious level, he had forgotten the young Englishman by now, but still there was, as it were, a shadow

cast over this sunny autumn morning, a nagging sense of something wrong. Not that very much sun reached into this particular quarter of the city. Dark, severe, in the Middle Ages it must have been also smelly, disease-ridden and brutish. It was unspoiled certainly, but also grim, even unlovely. The dark ages. Their actuality forced itself upon him here more perhaps than anywhere he had known. There was no gloss of modernity here, let alone of tourism. He found his way eventually to the large church of San Sisto, and out of the Porta Romana, out of the walled city altogether. Dedicated to the ancient and archaic as he was, he felt relief, he felt lighter, as he stepped along more modern, neutral streets in the autumn sunlight. He took a look at one more church, Santa Maria della Verità (frescoes by Lorenzo da Viterbo) before arriving at his morning's last destination, the Museo Civico, housed in an old convent with a fine cloister.

Here, however, he was a little disappointed, for not only was the general collection of little interest to him (museum rather than gallery in fact) but the place's one important painting was away for restoration. Well, one couldn't see all the art of Italy in one lifetime, not only because of the great quantity involved, but also because so much of it was being restored, or because that particular church was mysteriously closed, or the curators were on strike, or the picture had been stolen.

Back in his room, he put on the bedside lamp and lay down on the narrow bed with his book. He read a chapter or two. It was a Hardy novel that he'd never read before, part of a programme he had set himself, to complete the reading of the major 19th-century novelists and the rereading of certain very major or favourite works. The incongruity of Hardy in his present surroundings did occur to him (or non-congruity) but didn't trouble him—he found such emotional transfers easy—instant readaptation without much culture shock. What did give him pause, set him off thinking again and effectually brought the afternoon's reading to a premature end, was his whole programme. Had the presence of a fellow-countryman also contributed to his self-questionings? Because he was certainly at it again. The attempt to complete the reading of Hardy's fiction—wasn't it like his dogged circumambulation of Viterbo, looking at every church and other building mentioned in the guidebook? Wasn't it the same process as his steady collecting of recorded music in the days when he had had a settled home? As his circling round not only Italy but even the United States in search of the works of Piero and Antonello and Giorgione? As his whole programme of travelling, indeed of living? What was the function or purpose of it all? Art for life's sake. Reading literature, listening to music as a way of making one a "better" person—better, presumably, in one's human-kindness, one's relationships with others. Of course one knew all about that. The Nazi camp commandants going home to read Goethe or listen to Beethoven after stuffing people into the gas ovens all day. Though one did

wonder how well documented that was—and there was the point about Art being a consolation, a refuge from the horror. Still, pure aestheticism, dilettantism, came hard to him, and the greater joys, even excitements, still tended to come from art which had, no other term for it, a moral or religious dimension. (Tolstoy, Mahler, a Gothic cathedral.) Yet he had, now, no real relationship with anyone; those with women had failed and turned sour, those with men faded, decayed. More than that, he had, fairly deliberately, built his armour against any further emotional involvements or close entanglements.

So what was the point? That on his deathbed (a bed like this in a room such as this?) he could gasp out (to whom?), he would *know*, then, that he had read all of Hardy, seen every Vermeer, but maybe hadn't *quite* got to the end of Gibbon? It was the same old problem of the brief existence in which, nevertheless, one strains to fill in the hours, the days, while decades pass. A man must have an occupation, as Lady Bracknell commented when she learned that the young man smoked. Collect stamps. Restore antique furniture. Follow football. So in the end it came down to that. He was filling in the interstices of time. It was enough perhaps, in order to claim finally that one hadn't wasted one's time more grievously than anyone else, that one's use of it could—just about—be justified.

PARTICULARLY RESTLESS this afternoon, he didn't sleep but went out again, this time strolling aimlessly and even window-shopping, until it was time to return and wander out finally to bar and trattoria. This time he was scarcely seated in what he had already come to regard as "Mamma's place", presided over by an archetypal Italian mamma, when the man Landon appeared in the doorway, spotted him instantly and came up to join him. There was no refusing, though Hartman was intensely annoyed and frustrated at having his aloneness violated and his reading over dinner taken away.

Thinking back over the long and strange conversation with Landon afterwards, as to his dismay he did for a considerable proportion of the night, he found it difficult to reconstruct, particularly those points at which the major "revelations" must have come. The man, as he had suspected, had wanted to unburden himself, though at the end of the evening, he still gave the impression of carrying the burden. Well, Hartman hadn't been perfectly sympathetic, had disappointed the fellow probably. Not just because other people's troubles—especially of that sort—seemed very remote now but because he had not felt in sympathy with the man himself or with specific aspects of his complaint. For, in that sense (the poet complains . . .) that was what it was.

Landon had been married five years to a girl who was still in her twenties, and had thought he was happy. "I

never really knew her, I suppose. She always tended to be a bit quiet, withdrawn even. Passive. I thought she would 'come out' more, in time, you know. She seemed happy enough, but I always felt something reserved, held back."

"What about sex?" Hartman had asked, a bit brutally. Well, the fellow couldn't pin him down and reel off all his private woes and then complain that he was too personal in his questioning. Nevertheless a look of slight distaste passed over Landon's face.

"Well, that's it. It didn't seem to be so marvellous for her. She insisted everything was all right, but looking back now I suppose she couldn't really reach fulfilment or satisfaction with me."

"Well, all that's exaggerated anyway", was Hartman's response. "We've got a thing about that these days. The perfect orgasm. Doesn't happen probably. But thousands of marriages break up needlessly because of someone's stupid search for it."

Again Landon had looked troubled. Hartman seemed to him to be minimising, reducing, the great crisis of his life. Landon and his reserved wife had come to Italy for a holiday, and the crisis had occurred there. In Florence actually. Rather unoriginal, Hartman thought.

But the actual revelation had still been a surprise. Unfortunately the surprise was mingled with amusement which he hadn't altogether succeeded in concealing.

"A woman! Now do you understand how I feel? She's left me for a woman!"

The man was clearly distraught, his whole frame of existence shattered. Yet Hartman wanted to chuckle, or smirk, which was unfair. But like the ceiling falling on John XXI, it was a kind of joke.

"But is it for good? Are you sure it's not—er—a passing affair?" Again the look of distaste. The man was obviously disgusted or pained or both by the idea of such an affair.

"Oh yes, she wrote a letter." He patted his jacket—presumably he carried this portentous missive with him. Hartman hoped that he wouldn't extract it and insist on reading it to him. But no, he wanted to talk but not really to reveal. "She'd discovered her true nature. . . ."

"And her true love, presumably." Trying hard not to sound facetious. Not quite succeeding. "Tell me. Do you find this as upsetting as or more upsetting than going off with another man?" Hartman was genuinely curious on this point.

Landon made it very clear that for him it was worse, that an affair with another man could eventually be forgiven if not forgotten, that one might even recover one day from a permanent betrayal (he clearly saw things in these terms) with another male.

"It's not just our marriage, all we had together. It's as if I myself am being destroyed, as if I can't be sure if I really exist any more. It's unbearable to think of." And the man actually buried his face in his arms for a

few moments, to raise it again, embarrassed, as the waiter brought great dollops of *dolce latte* to them.

Well, he's still eating, thought Hartman, though more or less without noticing what he's eating. He himself, he thought, would not be affected in this way. If it was a question of a finite affair, or a series of brief encounters, say for variety, for the indulgence or expression of one facet of the personality, or for that matter for a cheap thrill—then surely it could be accommodated within the marriage or the main relationship. He didn't think he would be jealous of another woman. If it was a permanent move, he still thought he could overcome that more easily if the third member of the triangle were female. No personal blame fell on one. One couldn't help one's sex, or the preference of others in that connection. But here was this man Landon broken by the failure of his maleness, as it were, to hold on to his wife. And thus that maleness, and hence his whole being, was questioned, had been found wanting, in his own eyes at least. Yet it was not really the man's own failure, or might not be.

"The other woman" was Italian, rather beautiful, in her thirties, and a Contessa or something of the sort. It was even said that she had a husband. Would an Italian, of all men, put up with a wife who preferred other women to him, or was it simply a question of divorce being so much harder to arrange in Italy? Landon anyway was vague about details, or didn't know them, or couldn't remember. There had apparently been no man around when the Contessa had invited him—both of them on the first occasion. "My wife has fallen in love with a Contessa." Would the statement be mainly one of pain, or of embarrassment, or of pride, or of comedy? Again he was aware that instead of listening with solemn awe, he persisted in his awareness of the comic side of the whole situation. The man no doubt just thought him rather heartless.

Landon was an accountant, his wife a professional orchestral player (viola) and the elegant Contessa was highly musical. Hartman would have preferred, far preferred, to have spent time in the company of Nicola (the violist) or the Contessa or both. Lesbianism would merely be an added bonus, for then a pleasant acquaintanceship was possible without any threat of a more intimate connection.

Yet the man truly was distraught and somewhat pitiful, adrift here in Viterbo, and Hartman's night and even his dreams were troubled. He took the man more seriously, or the man's situation took hold of him more seriously, when he was away from him than when he was actually in his presence—then he was basically bored and frustrated by that presence.

HE HAD ALREADY SEEN the churches and other places of interest in Viterbo, but there was still the Santa Maria della Quercia at La Quercia, twenty minutes by bus from the station. Hartman de-

cided to take the short trip next morning, and again there was a pleasant sense of relief in leaving the walled city and being among more ordinary surroundings. Nostalgia for the absolutely ordinary. His mind jumped to the rows of terraced houses glimpsed from railway carriages in suburban England, and how often he had longed to be part of that warming ordinariness. Not that this church was exactly ordinary once he got there. But it was one of those cold gems of the Renaissance, like Santa Maria della Consolazione outside Todi (no consolation there)—perfect, architecturally a triumph, yet somewhere lacking the human dimension of, say, the streets of the old city—lacking human warmth, human untidiness, human imperfection. Strange that he who seemed to have severed most human ties still judged by this kind of standard. At any rate, there were a lot of interesting bits and pieces inside the church, and, afterwards, a simple little bar opposite where he managed to take his coffee to a table and sit down without paying extra—a rare event in Italy. In the end he walked the couple of miles back to the town.

He read steadily and determinedly through the afternoon, to make up for time lost on the previous evening and, he suspected, the coming one. He wouldn't change his eating place just to avoid Landon. Such rudeness was beyond him and anyway he found the place so comfortable and comforting with its rustic simplicity and plenty. And he did feel a small twinge of sympathy for the fellow. He did, however, go to the trattoria a little later than usual, to find Landon already ensconced and beckoning to him. There was no decent escape.

That night's dinner-table conversation was essentially a repetition, and it was quite impossible to divert the accountant from his obsessive problem. It was clear that he ought to have been back in England by now, attending to business, let alone the business of divorce, which his wife had asked for. Apart from putting up at a lower class of hotel than he was accustomed to, he had made no concessions to the situation, and seemed to be remaining in Italy more out of inertia, a nullity of the will, than for any positive reasons or plans. He said he was too shocked even to try to see her, though he was writing again. "I'll try one last time." Hartman returned to the hotel that night bored and dissatisfied, Landon in tow.

And now Hartman should really have moved on, or at least moved back to Rome. He had seen everything he had thought to see in this city and its immediate environs. Yet when next morning came—a lovely mild sunny one—he hadn't packed his small bag, and he didn't leave. He fancied another stroll through the Contrada on this marvellous day, and he could also wander over other parts of the city not mentioned in the guidebook. And so he stayed on in Viterbo, day after day, following rituals of strolling, coffee-drinking, afternoon siestas, and nightly dinners with the accountant at Mamma's place. What did the other do? How did he spend his day? For they never encountered

each other in the daytime, only over dinner, when the conversation went on repeating itself. Hartman tried to introduce new subjects, to talk about Italy, even in desperation to ask him for some professional advice. But the man's mind couldn't concentrate on anything for more than a few moments before returning to his great crisis, which had immobilised him in this strange archaic city.

After all, it was the same everywhere. Each town only required a couple of days or so, with some an afternoon was sufficient; yet he had, as it were, the remainder of a lifetime to occupy. He ought to savour each place, and Viterbo indeed was immensely atmospheric and savourable. He would not again enter the museum and again look at all those third-rate artefacts, he wouldn't even look again into the churches, except possibly the Duomo; but he could go on wandering, and did so, even when there were two or three days of heavy rain in succession. He thought of the accountant, staying on here without purpose, his days empty, while he lived through his great crisis. Wasn't his own crisis a continuing one? How long would he go on like this? How real, how essential, was his interest in what he saw? He had, in fact, a small rented flat in London—could he finally settle down there? But each time he stayed there, he was compelled to uproot himself and wander off. He couldn't stay still. Perpetual movement and perpetual sightseeing concealed for the time being the emptiness that gaped so obviously before Landon. But wasn't that at the centre of everything anyway? Wife, children, mistress, involving causes and pursuits—weren't they all "covers"? If one thought that, then the choice was between using the most convenient cover and living in a kind of *néant*, a spiritual black hole.

He almost lost count of days, immersed in the atmosphere of the ancient city, though in fact there had only been six of them in Viterbo when, on that night, he found Mamma's place closed. Puzzled at first, he saw the notice "CHIUSO LUNEDI" and recalled that all Italian eating places closed one day of the week, the day of their choice. Well, there was another trattoria almost opposite. But he hesitated, and then felt a rush of freedom, of release—he could be free of the other man, at least tonight. So he hurried back to his room to pick up his novel (he had given up taking it with him) and strode off deep into the town, where he ended up at an unsatisfactory ristorante where somehow he couldn't concentrate on reading anyway. The food was poor too, the service surly. He returned to his room that night in a bad mood; his freedom had been only emptiness after all. He drank two brandies and slept.

THE NEXT MORNING was murky and rain-drenched. Inhospitable and cheerless though his room was, he couldn't really walk around in these conditions; he stayed in and wrote a couple of letters

until he was finally disturbed by the elderly chambermaid. The rain had slackened. Just a drizzle. He let the woman finish and proceed to other rooms, then slowly put on his raincoat and put his book in his pocket—he would find some café where he could sit and read. At that point he heard the scream, and a rush of feet. Then, soon afterwards, people running upstairs. He would wait until whatever it was had blown over, calmed down. But shortly, steps approached his room, and somebody knocked on the door and he heard a voice crying "*Signore! Signore!*" At that moment he knew. Or at least a thought or premonition came to him which turned out in the event to be accurate. The owner of the hotel stood at his door, talking non-stop and gesticulating, the cleaning woman was behind him weeping, and another woman, the owner's wife probably, was also in the offing. The owner seized his arm and pointed him in the direction of a room down the corridor. Hartman walked down the corridor and entered the room, closely followed by the others. Responsibility. They didn't want to be held responsible, they wanted his witness, unnecessary as it was. The truth was so clear, so unambiguous. For once.

The man Landon lay on the bed, obviously dead.

Equally obvious was an empty bottle of what presumably would have been sleeping pills or tranquillisers. Hartman's first thought was: I thought only women did it that way. His second was: Why are they all looking at me, waiting for me? His third was: I missed him last night. What if I'd dined with him as usual? His dominating feeling was annoyance, not even shock. In the meantime they all stood around exchanging banalities about him being dead, and not being old, and looked worried, and doubtless also felt annoyed. A nuisance, and not particularly good for business. The owner referred to various officials he would have to call. Hartman escaped back to his room, disclaiming any special knowledge of the man or the circumstances, though he had been seen returning with him from dinner. When the owner was occupied with the emissaries of Italian officialdom, he slipped out of the hotel and walked hard round the city, his steps taking him once more across the Piazza della Morte and over the Ponte del Duomo. Of all things, he didn't want to get involved with Italian bureaucracy. He decided as he walked that he would leave the hotel and Viterbo today if it were at all possible. If they had met over dinner last night, as on the previous days, would he have been still alive? But did that mean that they had to go on having dinner together for infinity, since at the first break in the routine the man's frail will to survive would crack? That was nonsense. He might so easily have gone to a different restaurant even on the second night. Perhaps he had written that last appealing letter to his wife, and had received an ultimate rejection. Though surely there had hardly been time for that? Should he search the fellow's room for such a letter? Should he indeed attempt to find an address for her so that he could at least inform her? The police would

eventually do that. He himself would miss seeing the Contessa, but. . . .

And then he thought again of death and of ways of dying. He was perhaps twenty-five years older than Landon, and still alive. The wrong one had died, the wrong one had killed himself. Despite his present misery, Landon had still a future ahead of him, possibilities of a second marriage, children, a career, a life. Landon's method of death would be apter for himself, and really preferable to almost any other he could conceive of. It caused complications for others, but in his case those others would simply be the hotel proprietor and staff and local officials. So in Landon's case also, of course. Would the viola player feel remorse? Was that the whole idea? Had Landon perhaps not meant to die, hoped to recover? Again, Hartman felt dislike for Landon, disapproval. Suicide as an act of self-pity and would-be vengeance he felt to be extremely distasteful, far worse than suicide as an expression of total breakdown. The act of self-slaughter seemed much more acceptable, on the other hand, as an alternative to a slower and more painful death, or even a calm decision to take the law into one's own hands when there really seemed no future. Meantime one must retain and extend one's interests. He had yet to visit the great classical sites of the South and to experience southern baroque. . . .

He returned to the hotel and insisted on checking out. Rather to his surprise, he wasn't stopped. They looked askance at him, they didn't approve, the owner indeed started talking about his "poor friend" and Hartman strove to emphasise that the man wasn't really a friend. He had just happened to have spoken to him once or twice. He wasn't believed, but nobody prevented his departure.

ON THE SHORT RAIL JOURNEY to Rome, he felt unwell. A constriction in the chest. The ensuing slight panic sending blood pressure still higher. He concentrated his thoughts on a plan of attack for the South, and even started making notes of a possible itinerary. The illness passed, and he felt perfectly normal as he walked out of the great Stazione Termini and strolled towards the cheap pensione where he had left a suitcase and where he would hope to stay a night or two before setting off again. It was now early evening, and as he walked he was accosted by one of the prostitutes who frequented the streets around the station. The Eternal City, he thought, had the oldest and ugliest members of the eternal profession. Did those vast frowsy dragons really find custom? How desperate would one have to be? They didn't even look maternal or *simpatiche* in any way. Yet they must make a living, and if one watched, as he had done from pensione windows, they went off with clients fairly regularly. But still to Hartman it seemed as if they were

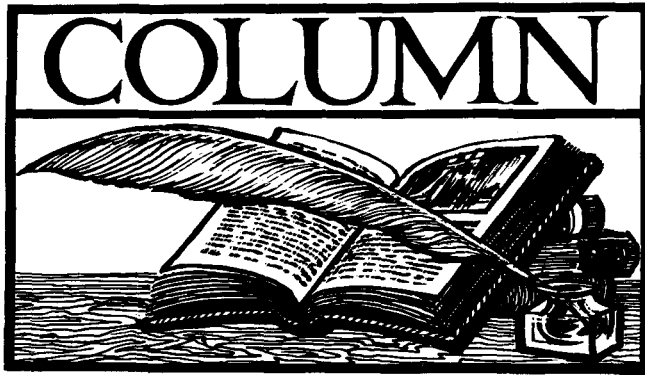
put there as part of a design, a stage set, part of the irredeemable squalor of the modern city.

He recovered his case from the pensione but there were no vacant rooms, and he had to move on in search of a room, jostling with the crowds, climbing staircases and ringing bells (even the lifts in these buildings required money to operate them, and one never had the necessary small change) until he eventually found a vacancy. Another room, a window from which other cheap hotels could be seen, the backs and roofs of houses. Quieter than front rooms, although there could be a pretty impressive assortment of noises from any direction in Rome. He arranged his things and lay down for a brief rest, and a sudden tide of emotion swept over him, overwhelmed him. He hadn't been thinking consciously about Landon, he had put all that out of his mind. But like any physical shock to the system, this morning's shock (it was only this morning!) must have its effects, must take its course through the system irrespective of one's own will or conscious thought processes. The emotion, now, preceded thought but created it. He tried to analyse his feelings, and was confused by them. Annoyance and frustration had certainly evaporated. The primary element was sadness, sorrow. In his own way, belatedly, despite himself, he was grieving for the poor confused and broken accountant, stranded in Italy far out of his depth. He wished now that they had met and shared a meal last night, and for a few more nights. Maybe a few more days would have seen him out of the nadir of his depression, the heart of the crisis. He had merely found a species of black humour in the man's story and situation, just as, in his determination to avoid self-pity, he found it in his own situation and past history. In his own ex-wife's rejection of him, for example. Well, at least she had preferred men. Successful ones. A number of them.

The wave passed. Giles Landon at least could be exonerated, if he himself could not be. The man's buttonholing of him was forgiven and forgotten. One was a human being, even if by sheer chance, rather than vegetable slime or a piece of rock on a dead star, though one would, he vaguely supposed, become something very much of that sort eventually. In the meantime, he was as he was. He washed in preparation for going out to dinner. He would drink a whole litre instead of a half, he thought, in honour of his late acquaintance. There was no pain in his chest now, no discomfort.

He looked at the small mean room. Not here, he thought. He looked out of the window, and saw the signs, some lighted, of various cheap hotels and pensioni which proliferated in these streets near the great railway terminus. One of them caught his attention: Albergo Terminal. He smiled. That one must be waiting for me. When my time comes, I'd better stay there. But tomorrow. . . .

Tomorrow I will take the train to Naples, and head South.



PARIS a few weeks ago looked like a city invaded. Not only by the winter tourists; not only by the students, successfully contesting the Government's plans for university reform. The main occupying forces were armies of workmen, digging holes in the streets, refurbishing houses, putting up vast new offices and banks. What with skips, scaffolding, cranes, and duckboards, it all reminded me of Brussels, perennially being rebuilt. Opposite the new Gare d'Orsay gallery, even the Tuileries Gardens were in turmoil. Thin saplings had replaced old trees; some joker had wrapped most of the statues in pink lavatory paper; and alongside the rue de Rivoli the seasonal fun-fair had returned: hurdy-gurdies, steam roundabouts, sideshows—all the wheezing jollity of Luna-Park. In such surroundings, it seemed as intrusive as the Pompidou Centre, the Pei pyramid outside the Louvre, or the modernistic pillars erected in the Palais-Royal. But at least, unlike them, the fair was temporary, a *fête foraine*, an affair of strolling showmen.

These, *les forains*, have always cast a peculiar spell. In *Hard Times* Dickens contrasted "Mr Sleary's horse-riding" with Mr Gradgrind's joyless pedantry. In romantic fiction, operetta, and the music-hall, the word "vagabond" awoke wistful echoes; and if Fellini's film *La Strada* exposed the harshness of life as an itinerant entertainer, Jacques Demy's *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* actually glamorised salesmen travelling with a commercial exhibition. "*Nous voyageons*", they sang, "*de ville en ville . . . de fille en fille. . . Dans la vie tout nous est—facile.*"

Forain, of course, has the same late Latin root, *foranus*, as the English "foreign": all mean, essentially, "outsider". That term itself still trails overtones of Edwardian disapproval ("a rank outsider"); and in today's shrunken world "foreigner", like "Crusade", has become a dirty word. George Mikes helped to banish "alien". Fritz Spiegl, that lynx-eyed park-keeper of language, prowls a similar beat. He likes his name to be pronounced "Speegl", he says. "Anyone who religiously uses the correct '*shp*' is suspected of calling me a Bloody Foreigner."

The remark occurs in Spiegl's sizzling new book, *The Joy of Words*.¹ Its front-cover parodies *The Joy of Sex*; but, although its last chapter dwells on the euphemisms and dysphemisms attracted by that topic, most of the compendium covers usage and abuse, especially by reporters and

broadcasters like Spiegl himself. Dog eats dog, that is, and with infectious relish. For fourteen years, Spiegl wrote a weekly column in the *Liverpool Daily Post*. This, we're told, "terminated abruptly" after he published *Keep Taking the Tabloids*, which savaged the popular press. He now writes in the BBC's weekly, *The Listener*. Much of *The Joy of Words* is culled from earlier writings and broadcasts; but it's organised by subjects, although unindexed, and has helter-skelter readability marred only, for me, by the wavy line printed down the outside edge of every page. A doodler's mark of disagreement? A subliminal advertisement for Wavy Line grocery stores? Or a discreet tribute to the wavy Navy, the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve? Whatever it is, it distracts attention from the cannibal feast.

"A social worker, speaking on the BBC, sharply interrupted her interviewer. 'We do *not* call it "baby battering", she reproved him. 'We call it "non accidental injury".' They also speak of some evil, tattooed bully as 'my client', while he, in turn, refers to 'my probation officer' as proprietorially as if he were speaking of 'my lawyer' or 'my bank manager'."

"A young journalist who recently covered a murder trial tells me that when she returned to her office the editor asked, 'Was he dragged screaming from court?' She replied, 'No, he just looked a bit upset and a policeman led him down to the cells.' The editor replied, 'You will write, "A man was dragged screaming from court. . . ."' If tears are shed, there are only two ways of weeping: 'openly' or 'unashamedly'."

"Union leaders have developed a vocabulary and style (and often pronunciation) all their own, often so grand as to sound stilted, using words and expressions their flat-capped-and-muffled fathers would have gawped at: conditionality, guidelines, comparabilities, automaticity, harassment, diktat ('dick-tatt'), victimisatory, impasse ('imm-pess'), intimidatory, composite ('compo-site'), provocative, divisive ('divizzive'); and, of course, concepts like the social contract; or a predilection for convoluted expressions such as 'underpinning the wages infrastructure'. This kind of language has become almost mandatory (which has the stress on the 'date'). Union leaders speak not of 'our members' but 'my members' (as in 'my members' aspirations)—which I would find insufferably patronising if it came from any boss of mine. 'The lads' are deemed to include the lasses."

"The workers' struggle. . . . You really do have to be word-deaf to take politics seriously. Joggle, waggle, boggle, goggle, wiggle, jiggle, giggle, snuggle . . . twee, facetious or comic-sounding words, all of them, and I suspect *struggle* joined them because it became a left-wing buzz-word after some early translator of Marx or Engels chose it for *Kampf* in preference to the more obvious but somehow less suitable 'fight'."

The word 'struggle' always conjures up for me a picture of Edward VII, when on 9 February 1909 he arrived at Rathenow railway station and 'struggled to get into the uniform of a German Field-Marshal that was two sizes too

¹ *The Joy of Words*. By FRITZ SPIEGL. Elm Tree Books, £5.95.

A cross-section of our growth, past, present and future.

May we ask you a couple of questions?

One. Which do you think is the most useful invention of the past hundred years or so?

Two. Which do you think will grow fastest in the next fifty?

You're bound to consider the internal combustion engine, the aeroplane, atomic energy and the microchip, of course. But how about telecommunications?

You have to admit there's a case to be made for them, and it's timely to make it now.

It'll take a short history lesson but we promise to make it as painless as possible.

1866, the Entrepreneur.

The founder of Cable and Wireless was a rather vigorous and determined entrepreneur called John Pender.

In 1866 he was responsible for laying the first transatlantic submarine cable.

With the dots and dashes of the Morse Code, it meant the United Kingdom was only a few minutes away from the eastern seaboard of the United States (Stock Exchange and Wall Street closing prices were transmitted daily).

By the end of the century he'd created a

submarine cable empire that virtually covered the world and stretched for fifty thousand miles.

Unending success beckoned? Not exactly.

1920's, the Italian.

A young Italian scientist called Marconi had earlier patented his radio device and now offered a transatlantic telegraph service (the one which brought Crippen to trial).

It was three times faster than cable at about one twentieth of the cost.

Marconi made the British government an offer they couldn't refuse: that his telegraph service and our cable assets be merged.

It was a happy marriage which, helped by the new technology, prospered even during the depressed thirties.

1950's, the voice.

Then in the mid 1950's the first coaxial cable was laid across the Atlantic, carrying distant voices. (Though you still had to queue-up to make a call.)

But the pace of innovation was quickening.

Rockets placed satellites in space, to and from which we bounce messages on 44,000 mile journeys between our earth stations round the world.

Next came larger coaxials, then the miraculous fibre-optic cable carrying voice and data at the speed of light (the entire Encyclopaedia Britannica in a flash).

Now, computers and micro-waves all play their part, but our real growth as a company has accelerated in the past four years.

1981, the new freedom.

In 1981 the government privatised us in its belief that companies flourish when managers are free to act in an entrepreneurial spirit (shades of John Pender).

We are proud to say we have repaid its trust.

Mid-1980's, the explosion.

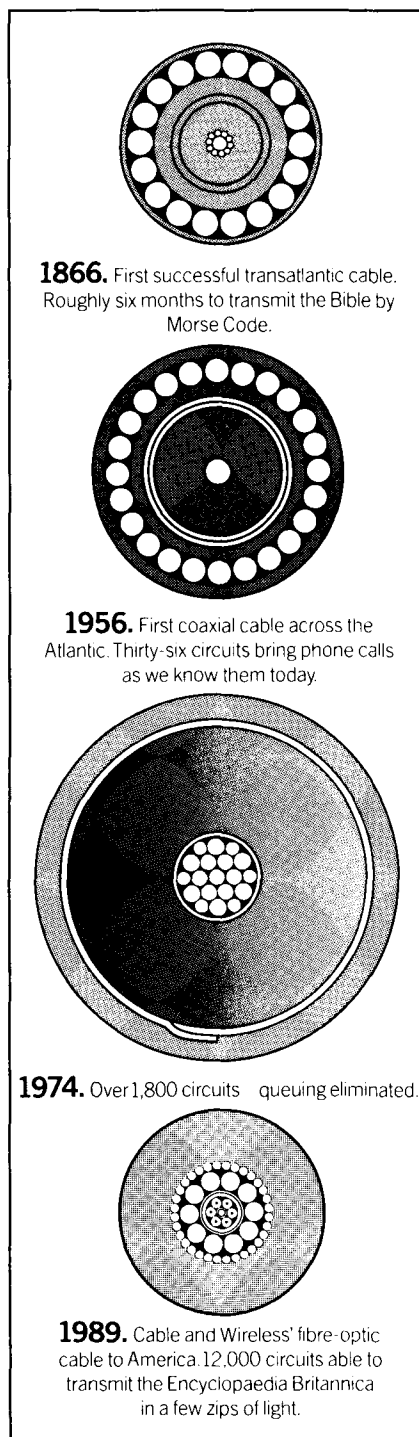
There's nothing new in people's urge to communicate of course. But as international business has grown, this urge has now assumed unprecedented proportions.

Just about every country in the world is expanding and updating its telecommunications. And new technology is constantly needed to make systems faster, cheaper and more effective over greater distances.

Currently in fact, we're improving and maintaining systems in some thirty-six countries.

In Hong Kong we operate both its internal and external telecommunications systems.

During 1985 we agreed with China to



study together the feasibility of establishing up-to-date telecommunications between the main cities of the Yangtze Delta.

Meanwhile, in America we've laid fibre-optic cable along the railroad from Dallas to Houston and we are operating circuits from New York to Washington and soon, Chicago.

In Barbados we are co-operating with the government to bring the latest digital communications to the island and help its main industry, tourism.

In Bahrain, we have a 40% stake in one of the most advanced telecommunications services in the Middle East and we manage the entire system.

While in 1984, our ships laid a submarine cable linking Australia and New Zealand with Canada via Fiji and Hawaii—eight thousand miles in all.

The long-term view.

We hope we have shown how Cable and Wireless has grown bigger as the world, in communication terms, has grown smaller.

However, if you would like to know more, write to the Press Office, Cable and Wireless plc, Mercury House, Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8RX.



small. . . .’ (He struggled so long that the welcoming German band was obliged to play ‘God Save the King’ 17 times in succession till a purple-faced monarch finally emerged. . . .)”

I’ve quoted enough to show that parts of *The Joy of Words* are political as well as linguistic. They might be subtitled “The Joy of Cant”. On this evidence, Fritz Spiegl is refreshingly *middle-class*, *élitist*, and *divisive*—i.e. educated, polyglot, and frank. I’m sure he harbours no class, race, or sexual prejudice; and I’ll bet he believes in equality. But what he calls “the discrimination industry” practises verbal posturing; and that he treats with appropriate scorn.

“The obligatory shibboleth which appears at the head or foot of almost every public or private appointments offer, ‘We are an Equal Opportunity Employer’, is itself often belied in the text. Thus Harrow Borough Council, seeking an Allotments Officer, qualifies the ‘Equal Opportunity’ line with the ominous warning, ‘This post is subject to LMGSC ringfence procedure. Applications are restricted to employees of the GLC and London Local Authorities.’ Many Equal Opportunity Employers state ingenuously, ‘Preference will be given to applicants of ethnic minorities’ (by which they do not mean Swedes, Italians, or Greeks, but blacks). Some equality!”

Advocates of “positive discrimination” might answer that favouring “blacks” is intended to redress past inequality and lost opportunities. They might also detect slight schoolboyish glee or defiance in Fritz Spiegl’s unearthing of now taboo words like “nigger” in old popular songs, fabric colour charts, children’s books, seaside concert-parties, classical music titles, or (which he doesn’t mention) one of Joseph Conrad’s finest works.

NOT THAT SPIEGL, or any “white” (pinko-grey), would think it right to use such offensive language today. For similar reasons, decent gentiles avoid terms like “kike” or “yid”. Knowing, too, that many “blacks” are understandably touchy, tactful “whites” may show them especial care and courtesy—like the traditional Englishman saying “Sorry!” when someone steps on his toe.

That degree of “positive discrimination” seems to me unexceptionable. But it’s not always easy to sustain. A pretty 16-year-old “white” girl I know was ushered by a bus-conductor to the last empty seat on the upper deck. A man was sprawling over half of it. “Would you mind?” she asked; but he didn’t move or reply. She perched on the edge of the seat—then found he was cosying up to her. She edged away. He muttered something, followed by, “You didn’t have to come and sit here.” “It was the only seat left, and we’re not allowed to stand.” More cosying and muttering, then: “Why won’t you talk to me?” “I don’t want to.” “Why did you come and sit here, then?” “I told you”, she said, and turned away. “You go and take your high-society voice to talk with

your high-society friends”, he said, and resumed his sprawl. None of the other passengers intervened.

The point of the incident is that the man was “black”. Had he been “white”, the girl and the passengers might have been less forbearing. As it was, she tried to be polite. She resented his behaviour as a man, not as a “black”; telling me the story, she mentioned his colour as an afterthought, and with misgivings. He, no doubt, thought her cold and snobbish, a typically racist whitey. But how else could a schoolgirl have reacted?

“POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION” has other pitfalls, too. It may increase, not lessen, racial prejudice among those discriminated against. It may lower efficiency, by appointing or promoting people for irrelevant reasons. It may even, in some cases, undermine the self-confidence of its supposed beneficiaries. If used at all, therefore, it needs to be handled with care.

But this, it seems, is a quality rare in “the discrimination industry”. In a recent set of polemical essays, a number of articulate sceptics have homed in on *Anti-Racism—An Assault on Education and Value*.² They include such familiar names as Professor Antony Flew and the former Bradford headmaster Ray Honeyford, as well as Professor Roger Scruton, Roy Kerridge, Dennis J. O’Keeffe; but also involved are at least one lifelong Socialist, one social worker, and several teachers from comprehensive schools. Their joint message is that “anti-racism”, in the wrong hands, can become inverted racism, harming those it champions, and replacing the hope of equality and racial harmony by a perverse fomentation of racial strife.

The book’s targets include the linguistic fetishism lampooned by Fritz Spiegl: attacks on Shakespeare, *Little Black Sambo*, and Agatha Christie; the rewriting of nursery rhymes; allegations that race prejudice is embedded in the language itself. On most of these issues I’m all for friendly robustness. It would be absurd to censure or censor Shakespeare on account of Othello and Shylock. *Little Black Sambo* is a cute and corny story from the colonial past, and should be treated as such; but at least Sambo’s the hero. Agatha Christie’s *Ten Little Niggers* (from a now reprehensible nursery rhyme) sounded almost as silly when first renamed *Ten Little Indians* as it does today when further M’Bowdlerised into *Ten Little Highlanders*. In the past, opprobrious nicknames like “Whig” and “Tory” were seized by their victims and brandished with a pride that killed the opprobrium. More recently, “Virago” has become a respected publishing house. Couldn’t “ethnic minorities” play the same trick? “Black is beautiful” was a brilliant slogan. It certainly appealed to me on coming back to Europe and seeing such mushroom pallor all around.

Yet “black”, as Flew and others point out, is a deeply misleading term. Contrary to some anti-racist allegations, the word itself in English carries many positive overtones; and if others are negative, so they are in Swahili and Hausa too. Nor, of course, are many Africans or Caribbeans anything like literally black-skinned. What “black” has become, in

² *Anti-Racism—An Assault on Education and Value*. Edited by FRANK PALMER. The Sherwood Press, £9.95.

effect, is a catch-all rallying-cry, aimed at brown and yellow Asians and their descendants as well as at those we used to feel free to call “negroes”. Needless to say, many Indians and Pakistanis feel ill at ease with so slapdash a definition. Some of them, who prize a pale skin, feel positively offended.

More important than pigmentation, however, are the cultural differences involved. The Swann Committee on The Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups found that the children of Asians performed better at school than those of West Indians, and concluded that “the reasons . . . seem likely to lie deep within their respective cultures.” But, according to Ray Honeyford, when a researcher commissioned by the Committee proposed to try to evaluate the influence of family values and backgrounds, “this caused uproar amongst West Indian organisations—whose views had a decisive influence on Swann. As a result, the research was suppressed.” Lumping all “blacks” together, in other words, makes it harder to get at the truth, and easier to put most blame on what the Swann Committee called an “underlying climate of racism” in British society.

No one could deny that many immigrants, in the first few generations, find life hard whatever their origin. They have less skilled jobs, poorer housing, linguistic and other problems of adaptation. Colour may add to their hardships: but it's not all that counts. Seeing the ease, in London, of cross-colour camaraderie, I question that sweeping “racist”

slur. And, having friends and acquaintances of every hue, I bitterly resent statements and policies which set “blacks” against “whites”.

NOT LONG BEFORE Christmas, I watched a TV programme on multi-cultural education. Among other things, it showed a “black” headmistress (in fact dark yellow) teaching non-Eurocentric geography and history. Splendid stuff. But it was followed by a “black” headmaster (and a wilting “white” educationist), forcing “white” children in the Midlands to learn Punjabi. Some of their parents were furious at the waste of time. The programme then turned, with almost a sneer in its voice, to a mainly “white” school in prosperous Solihull. Now, we were told, for the opposite view—the smug, racist one, we were left to infer. And the Solihull headmaster was asked how he believed in treating pupils of different races. “As human beings”, he answered: as members of the *human* race.

Silent collapse of tendentious programme. Collapse too, if I had my way, of anything that delays acceptance and assimilation—from racial *revanchisme* on the part of “the discrimination industry” to ghettoisation and provocation by mean, frightened, or simply thuggish “whites”. The real hope for any latter-day *foranus* lies in another Latin expression: *civis romanus sum*.

M

The Stranger

My kid came home,
the sea-winds still breeze through his hair
his step swings to
a tune of fear endured and journey's joy.

Salt spray enflamed
his tanned cheeks, they glow with a russet bloom:
forced fruit, burned ripe
in the fuming savage heat of foreign suns.

His heavy glance
conceals a secret I shall never know
veiled in a mist
as he stepped out of spring into our winter.

The bud was burst
so open that I nearly shrank to see it,
my mouth would not
kiss lips that chose another mouth to kiss.

My arm embraced
a thing unmoved by me, bloomed, grown into
another world—
my very own, and infinitely a stranger.

Stefan George

Translated by B. K. Ngabwe

Ron Butlin

The Perfect Servant

I have a perfect servant: if he could
he would move mountains for me or command
the clouds (perhaps he does). I know I should
be grateful—and I am. I understand
that servants don't come cheap (no extra food
or livery's required for him). And yet
his basic wage is killing me. . . . This debt
compounds itself until at thirty-five
I owe him all the years I've still to live.

The perfect clerk: no bureaucratic please
or thank you sir stroke madam, deleting where
applicable (thereafter: "this" or "these").

He's equal parts composer,
prophet and historian combined—
for him all aspects of the past and future
happen *now*. All tenses intertwine
into a contrapuntal present he
keeps forcing to its resolution: me
and my discordant selves.

A true economist:
one traumatic childhood scene should last
a lifetime. His advice is simple: "Stick
to what you know, the unknown's always worse."
By the term "the unknown" he refers
to all that hasn't happened yet, and all
that has; "What I know" is what he cares
to tell me once I'm tired enough to fall
asleep. Nothing's left to chance: he dreams
all hopes and fears on my behalf. He claims
that "Out of sight is out of mind"—these clever
words seemed wise, I once believed. His ever-
perfect phrasing graces compromise,
however: well-told, well-intentioned lies.
All my life he's buried pain, sown
it, in effect, deep in me. It's grown
as I have, year by year, to adult size—
to flourish monstrously, self-fertilise
itself until this pain would rather split
my soul in two than loosen hold on it.

The past will never pass away: the master
will forget, but not the perfect servant—
he's too sensitive, dogmatic. Faster
than the softest software chip or fervent
spinning tape-search playback, he'll retrieve
one micro-second's guilt or grief and leave
the rest on "hold". If I hesitate,
he'll memory-dump all pain at mega-rate—
to overload the master-circuit till
my nerve-ends sting with psycho-chemical

anxiety. He prompts me so discreetly
I believe myself to be completely
in control of gestures, words and wit.
The truth, of course, is just the opposite.
In short, all decisions are always his,
viz: he gives compulsive definition
to what is and what is not. His fate
and his mortality determine mine:
My life is not my own and never has been.

Stuart Henson

In the Museum

After those years he thought it was all over;
A new wife, her family and children
(How oddly grief can take root in the heart)
A day's outing, McDonald's, the Museum
Then just one image in a gallery—
A hare strung up and bleeding from the nose—
And he was there again on the black road
Driving his anger at the wall of night.

Each time he left and wasn't going back
The darkness might as well have been a cliff,
The road a chute into eternity,
But slowly as the pain ran out he'd stop
And sleep against the wheel until the dawn
Drew its horizontal line above
The downs or woke him with its wan rose-wash
In a cold car-park looking out to sea.

Only the once he knew it was the end:
The night the half-crazed creature leaped across
His tunnel of white halogen and swerved
And kicked and struck against the number-plate,
A dull thump, hopeless, though he stopped to search
And found her lying on her folded bones.
(If you could run time back what's done and said
might be reversed, those accidents disproved)

A painter's hare bought at some butcher's slab,
Immortalised in oils. Cook took it then—
Convenient; no carcass; no regrets;
Simply the picture hanging in its frame
And now young voices crowded in the room
Tug at his sleeve and call, repeat his name,
Urgent, anxious that he should catch them up—
As if time lost might somehow be regained.

NOTES & TOPICS

London Commentary

On the Betrayal of Ireland

By Edward Pearce



ONE TAKES UP Ireland as a topic without pleasure. Our two countries stand in a relation of sour acquiescence to one another. Patronage is repaid with resentment, and there is not the satisfaction of anything getting better. Like leukaemia, Ireland as an issue has remissions. There the metaphor stops—for leukaemia is terminal. Ireland is merely chronic, a lifelong uraemic condition which causes no end of petty misery, but permits life to struggle gamely along.

I say "Ireland" because one cannot talk usefully about "Northern Ireland", "Ulster", or "the Six Counties" without invoking the whole island. The tragedy of the Republic is that it has failed as a state and an economy almost as comprehensively as the northern bit has failed as a province. The bitterest solution to the Irish problem might be an admission that the Republic is not worth joining, the Province not worth having.

The island itself is as comprehensive a condemnation of conservatism with a small "c" as you are likely to encounter. One looks at the small-time, fly operators of Fianna Fail; at the half-mad drum-orators of Protestant Ulster; at the well-intentioned but visibly-at-sea administrators sent from Britain (like Sir Robert Andrew); at the *poseur* Tories who dedicate themselves to what they affect to call "The Union"; and at the murderers of the three killing bands—with almost perfect despair. Ireland is in an unreformable condition; apparently nothing can be done for it except to turn up the subsidy, and budget away the lives of a few more privates from East Anglia or Staffordshire on the altar of Western Europe's dirty, drunken, windbagging and evil backyard.

We feel like that, but of course we don't act that way. The sacrifice is made, so are the experiments and initiatives. And whenever there is hope we reach out and swing from it.

Hope tends to come from the handful of unrepresentative, decent, intelligent men who occasionally wander into office.

Dr Garret FitzGerald for one is a joy; not the usual shallow charming act of the Irishman playing the endearment lobby, but brains, principles, and honest if doomed government, with genuinely thoughtful men like John Bruton and Ruari Quinn beside him. Because Ireland was effectively bankrupted by Charles Haughey, the Republic is now the most absurdly over-taxed country in Western Europe. But FitzGerald came to power late, after the narrow base of the economy had been shrivelled beyond rescue in a crazy bout of spending by the preposterous Haughey, a builder's brother-in-law to end all builders' brothers-in-law. Ireland now faces the heaviest emigration since the Famine. It is also living up to the brutally candid observations some fifteen years ago of the late Cyril Darlington, who spoke of it as a decapitated society. Most of the best abilities go somewhere else. And why should they stay?

Not only is this pre-Voltairean society dominated by its clergy—undesirable even if it had a brace of Fénelons and Bossuets at the altars—but the higher clergy of the Republic are, mostly, an appalling bunch. The Archbishop of Dublin has a homiletic style which hovers below the intellectual breadline, and there is another Bishop of an important diocese (better not identified) whose drinking keeps the police in slow-motion, obstructive convoy late at night, to prevent the whiskylated prelate from doing himself or anyone else a serious injury. The Republic worships nodding madonnas and builds a desert airport—as irrational as Thatcher International at the future Porto Argentino—in order to bring pilgrims to the shrine of Knock! For the clergy of the Republic, the last three centuries have not taken place. Quite what a moderately sophisticated Italian, French, or German Roman Catholic priest would think of this bubble of primitive clerical authoritarianism, God (and I mean God) only knows.

THERE WAS a natural majority in the Republic for following the rest of Catholic Europe in acknowledging that some marriages do break down and, with safeguards, need the legal facility of divorce. Father O'Flynn took a swig from his bottle, consulted his missal, pronounced anathema . . . and the half-citizens of a theocracy crossed themselves and voted against. In the mud Ireland is; and over here only the Young Phonies gave a squeal of delight to find that a paradigm of their best reactionary imaginings actually existed. It does; and emigration goes up every year.

However, the melancholy condition of Catholic Ireland and the impossibility of a European Catholic like Garret FitzGerald being able to do anything for it, either as economy or civilisation, should not obscure the barbarian qualities of the Protestant north.

The *dramatis personae* there are, if possible, worse. Until they did us all a favour and withdrew their persons from Westminster, in protest at the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, I used to listen to the Ulster Unionist MPs in the House of Commons. The best of them, Harold McCusker, despite the usual whine, showed a sort of forlorn, distorted intelligence which should have been put to decent ends. The worst, William McCrea, could not combine eight words in

a sentence. Most of them were far below the mediocre standards of the dullerest mainland backbencher. The Rev. Ian Paisley, with his purchased doctorate from a Southern States degree mill, bull voice and quite dreadful charm, represented the Northern Ireland we all know—pattering rhetoric, narrow cunning, low intelligence, and a pitiful lack of education. These, along with poor fervent Enoch Powell, are the leaders whom the Protestant people of a Protestant province chose for themselves.

Brian Faulkner is dead in an accident. Young Edgar Graham, who had something to offer, was murdered by Gerard Adams's criminal gang. Otherwise the educated middle class stay out of politics. Never have cheap cracks against the bourgeoisie looked less apt than in sodden, futile Ulster. The bankers, lawyers, doctors and industrialists stay out of politics, and Ulster is represented by a political sub-proletariat. In what sort of country could Peter Robinson, with his cries for the execution of Mrs Thatcher, be a leading figure?

THE OTHER THING which requires to be understood about the province is that all power is fragmented. One Minister at Hillsborough drew a parallel with warlordism in China. Gerard Adams of the IRA rules one militant section of Northern Ireland, Ian Paisley and Peter Robinson have shared domination over another. The Chief Constable, Jack Hermon, a not very attractive figure, has another fief; the constitutional Catholics, John Hume and Seamus Mallon (in uneasy nationalist coalition since they have very different outlooks), command another section of the community. And if there is something Northern Ireland is not, it is a community!

Sir Robert Andrew with his pastel-green sympathies, ex-coriated by the Protestants, advises; Tom King, a very English Englishman, consents; money is poured in as if it were a hypothesis, to support industries less sound than the Kent Coalfield, while Enoch Powell, an opponent of state subsidy in England, favours every penny spent; crooks like John De Lorean (and not just from across the Atlantic) come to the public teat and suck hard. The Six Counties make up a nightmare economy which only a Labour Party Conference in a terrible year would vote for (when Neil Kinnock wasn't looking). It is perfectly Morrisonian. Employment exists overwhelmingly through the public payroll; 70% of GDP is recycled by the state, while subsidy keeps everything on the ward that can be kept out of the cemetery.

The British are told by the men in orange sashes that they are committing treason, betraying the Protestants by marginally cutting in the government of the Republic on some of the affairs of the Six Counties by way of consultation. With characteristic hysteria and a touch of serious despair, the Orangemen have blessedly marched out of Parliament (but not to my knowledge from their remuneration), taken to the grey streets, held monster meetings, and tried to conjure up the evil ghosts of Carson and Smith by pitching at the Protestant vote in Scotland. Meanwhile Mr Powell says, for a negotiated fee in a colour supplement, "I doubt if I have a country any longer. . . ."

Well, if there were an expeditious way of getting shot of the Ulstermen *and* Mr Powell, we mainstreamers would delight in taking it. Ulster is no kin of ours. Whatever its precise *legal* status, it functions as a half-conquered colony, a sort of Celtic Aden. It has nothing to do with the English or the Welsh and, apart from a few crazies, not too much to do with the Scots, whose collateral ancestors were put down in 17th-century Irish plantations. Though the Scots—who quietly cherish their own racial hatred for the Irish, even at an educated level, though it is subsumed into the forms of religion—have perhaps some murky notion of what this intestinal Celtic side-show is about. As for the rest of us—betray Ulster? We'd love to!

WE WOULD LOVE TO, but we don't. The role of the British in this last colony, where the only crops are death and deficit, has been that of a canal-horse pulling a party of tipsy Irishmen along in a barge from which, in intervals of holding prayer meetings and saying Mass, they periodically throw dead bodies. The British refuse to abandon these bloody and unspeakable people, despite the bottomless contempt in which we hold them, out of a fear that without a civilised presence they would cook up a civil war among themselves which some enemy could exploit. Gerard Adams of the IRA likes to call himself a Marxist when in reality he is a routine Irish psychopath who has read a couple of books. But undoubtedly the Marxist reputation of the Provisional IRA has played a part in influencing the Americans to influence us to stay where most of us don't want to be. The Ulstermen, goes the Whitehall argument, couldn't administrate a box of matches. Somebody has to rule them for their own good. If we really did rule the wretched place there might be some point in the argument; but the warlords rule; we simply subsidise, and use the British Army to minimise the killing.

YET THERE MIGHT BE a way out. I grow sceptical about the ability of Marxists to come to power in any part of Ireland. This is a very backward country, still close to the black medieval midnight of literal Christian dogma. It is frozen where Christianity stood before the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years War. Mr Adams stands a far better chance of being machine-gunned or hanged by his fellow-Gaels than by an advanced civilisation like Britain. A brisk civil war, with the Americans intervening on behalf of Dublin to obtain the annihilation of the IRA, is the most likely and ferocious outcome of a British withdrawal. And if the Americans want any part of Ireland they are heartily welcome to it—and to the haemorrhage of subsidy which comes gift-wrapped with the property.

But, realistically, we won't do anything so drastic. What is available to us, especially if it is coupled with a quiet expansion of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, is a steady run-down of our support for Ulster's economy.

Mrs Thatcher has specialised, where the North of England is concerned, in creative euthanasia. High interest rates, in an

economy geared to the City of London and her own insensitive indifference, have put great tracts of British marginal manufacturing under ground. It is equally open to us to taper down the cash subsidy to the Ulster economy, which is treated with absurd preference in comparison with England north of the M62 motorway. Don't stop giving to Ulster; let us give on the scale we give to Manchester. If at the same time Dublin's involvement in Ulster affairs were to be subtly stepped up—a sort of SALT 2 of British disengagement—though the Ulstermen would throw a few last paroxysms, and their unusual mainland friends, Messrs Ian Gow, T. E. Utley, and Eldon Griffiths, would make the usual noises in an amplified way, we could actually win.

Britain would win by breaking Protestant hearts. This she would do, not because she gave a button for the Roman Catholics, South or North (also alien people from a different century), but because peace in Ireland requires a victory. The humiliation of the Ulster Protestants and their submission to it, or the flight of enough of them to another country may be the only way to obtain that peace.

The foolish and opportunistic Tory politicians who once played the Orange card (against Gladstone, and then Asquith) killed a fair number of Englishmen and saddled us with a carcass of a province. Policy now should be based upon our perfect indifference (perhaps even tinged with dislike) to all the Irish. Whatever the wrongs, from Oliver Cromwell down to F. E. Smith, no part of Ireland concerns or benefits us.

IF AMERICA WANTS TO waste good money on the clerical wilderness in the south, good luck to her. But remember, the East-West situation is changing. Secretary Gorbachov has many ambitions, but a presence in the mud of old Ireland is probably not one of them. The blackmail imposed upon Britain by the Ulster Protestants and reinforced by our dislike of the IRA has less application than it did. We need time. We cannot pull out militarily all at once without traumatic consequences, but the work of unwinding the British subsidy in Ireland could start quietly.

It would have the good, enlightening, effects mentioned by Dr Johnson upon those with the prospect of being hanged in a fortnight. The Paisleys, Robinsons, Smyths and Molyneaux behave in the way they do because of a perfect certainty that the British, thinking them unfit, will pick up the tab and see them (like that glazed Catholic bishop) safely along the road and into bed. Getting the message that British sacrifice was finite and gradually being reduced might induce in them a simulation of common sense. The deal they need to make with Messrs Hume and Mallon, and with all those Catholics who have historically been barred from employment, becomes negotiable. And Irish Catholic opinion, which is reactionary in spades, might marginalise the Adams gang and its politics as only the Irish can marginalise one another.

There is no reason why we should stay for ever and get hurt playing patsy to Paddy and Billy. The ultimate Irish joke has been on *us*—the carriers for too long of a weary burden of blood and potatoes. I suspect Ulster has a real betrayal coming to it, for which it has sat up and begged during 57

years of brutal misrule and 17 of costing us, the British, with whom they have no kinship, more lives and money than we need to pay.

The watchword should not be “*Out of Ulster!*” but “*Attenuation*”. If we were, over a period of five years, systematically to reduce our financial commitment to the province while encouraging closer consultative links with Dublin, but maintaining the necessary military minimum commitment, we would give the Protestants the message they have so far refused to accept: that the alternative to their power monopoly is not comfortable British support but a drift to Dublin hegemony.

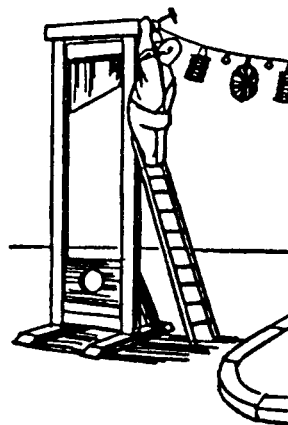
It is the only chance we have of frightening the brutes into effective power-sharing. And candidly, if they are too dull to get the message, we will have prepared and alerted Dublin for what must become her inheritance. At the end of an *unsuccessful* five years, with Ulster still claiming to be right, still frothing in the streets, we might well apply to make the Six Counties a United Nations trusteeship territory, with the Irish Republic and the USA as trustees with ourselves.

Somehow, I think that even the woodentops of Portadown would get *that* message.

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Revising French History: A Question of Genocide



IT is very much in the French grain, *très français* indeed, for a new work of history, a masterly performance by a 30-year-old scholar, to have given rise at first sight to a debate about terminology. Was the first impulse to assess the interest of documents brought to light after two centuries in the archival cellars? Or to measure the implications of the new information provided? Perhaps to evaluate the new attitudes

and revised understanding of the facts? Certainly not! French scholars immediately came to blows over the question of whether the author was entitled to use the word “genocide” in his title. *Une querelle de vocabulaire*.

As a 20th-century coinage (so runs the objection), the word is surely anachronistic in the context of 1793. But why? We readily talk about “inflation” in the Late Roman Empire, a *barbarisme* of our own devising, which would have baffled

Diocletian. “Anachronistic” would be to put such neologisms into the mouths of contemporary figures who could not possibly have used or known them. But why should *we* be forbidden to make use of them in order to characterise some historical situation, provided that the modern term actually applies? For my own part, I would say that we have the right to resort to the notion of “genocide” where the following concrete circumstances and criteria hold true:

(1) When the violence directed against enemies or rebels has the obvious—and sometimes even publicly stated—objective not only of quelling or subduing them, but of *exterminating* them;

(2) When the extermination extends to the entire population, combatant or not, irrespective of age and gender, in accordance with a premeditated plan and going beyond the direct or even indirect outcome of military operations;

(3) When this same purposeful process systematically destroys the civilians’ means of existence and subsistence—homes, fields, workshops, tools, livestock—quite deliberately, and not solely because of the rapacious inroads of the *soldatesque*;

(4) When organised killings attributable to a plan or design and not to chaos and anarchy continue after order has been restored and the adversary force rendered helpless.

It can scarcely be contested that these four features are often found in conjunction in the Revolution’s war of the Vendée. The control of policy was decided at the highest level. The French Revolutionary Convention, either directly or through the commands of its representatives in the field, made several proclamations of its firm intention to “exterminate the brigands of the Vendée”, to “thoroughly purge the soil of liberty of this accursed race”, to “depopulate la Vendée”. And this programme was indeed executed to the letter by the massacres of prisoners, of women (even in pregnancy), of children, of the aged. It was completed by the scorched-earth destruction of property:

“There has not been sufficient burning in the Vendée [wrote the Convention to the Committee of Public Safety] and no man or beast must be able to find sustenance on this soil for the space of a year.”

It wanted to erase even the name Vendée from human memory, and one member of the Convention proposed that it should be replaced on the list of *départements* by the name of “Vengé”. The “*département vengé*”—hence *la Vendée vengé*, the subtitle of the new book.¹

As for the continuation of massacres well past the purpose of keeping order—behaviour that makes palpable the intention to put an end to this rebellious tribe—long before our own time it outraged a historian like Edgar Quinet, who

was anything but a counter-revolutionary. In 1865 he wrote:

“The *grandes noyades* in Nantes took place in December 1793, so how were they supposed to save Nantes, which had already been saved in June, five months before? Carrier continued the exterminations after the rout of the Vendéens at Le Mans. Was it Carrier or Marceau who decided that rout? Thus it was that the Great Terror appeared nearly everywhere after the victories. . . .”

OUR FRENCH PURISTS of the lexicon of bloodshed, nevertheless, argue against Reynald Secher that “genocide” applies only to the murder of *foreign* populations. On that account, are we to say that what happened in Cambodia under Pol Pot was not genocide? Was the liquidation of the so-called Kulaks in the USSR in the 1930s not genocide? Or the massacre of 200,000 Ugandans between 1982 and 1985 by soldiers of President Milton Obote? Were the Armenians massacred in 1915 not Turkish nationals? And the *Communards* shot down en masse after their utter defeat in 1896, were they not Frenchmen? What a feeble distinction! Certainly it is always possible to improve on the definition, but that would require fixing the level at which *l’épuration*, a mass purge, becomes genocide.

That the repression in the Vendée went embarrassingly beyond the bounds of what the situation required is a fact so bald that the educational system of the French Republic, from school textbooks to university history departments, has been squalidly disguising its scale and fudging the atrocious details for a century and more. The Vendée has been dumped in the catacombs of partisan royalist or clerical history. But here lies the paradox: it is Reynald Secher, marked down by his very choice of subject as one of the “*contre-révolutionnaires*”, whose researches have been serious and sound enough to enable him to correct the general state of our information in a direction never dreamed of by any historian of the Republic. He even impartially establishes that the overall losses in the Vendée were very much *lower* than has been believed until now.

General Louis Lazare Hoche, who at one time commanded the Republican army in the Vendée, estimated the number of dead at 600,000. Since then, no historian—even those who thought this figure excessive—has ever reckoned the number at less than 300,000. Secher concludes, however, after scrupulous research, that of the 815,029 inhabitants who lived in the Vendée in 1792, the number who perished in battles or in massacres was 117,257, or 15% of the population. Which is less than had been thought, but still a great many, considering that the same percentage of the present population of France would result in a death-toll of some 7½ million victims.²

Of course, the central Revolutionary power in Paris could not tolerate the Vendéan insurrection, especially at the moment when a foreign war was raging. But the transformation of repression into genocide stems from an ideological, not a strategic source. This is confirmed, in any case, by other acts of savagery committed in other parts of France where no civil war was brewing. Thus the tiny village of Bédoin in the Vaucluse was punished for letting its Tree of

¹ *Le génocide franco-français: la Vendée vengé*. By REYNALD SECHER. Presses Universitaires de France.

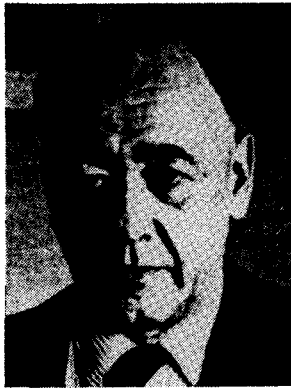
² Obviously the exterminations and destructions were not evenly shared among the communes. Some lost up to half of their inhabitants and their dwellings, others less than 5%. Secher has made a close study of one of these villages in a book which complements the other: *La Chapelle-Basse-Mer, village vendéen*. By REYNALD SECHER. Perrin.

Liberty be knocked down one night. When the Convention's envoy could not establish the guilty party, he ordained collective punishment: 63 inhabitants were guillotined or shot. The rest were driven out, and the whole village burned. "There is no spark of public spirit (*étincelle de civisme*) in this commune", the envoy serenely remarked in his report.

LIKE ALL POWERS which base their legitimacy upon an ideology, the Committee of Public Safety appears to have been incapable of asking itself why the people should want to resist it, whether actively or passively. In the Committee's eyes, *le peuple authentique* were themselves an absolute, abstract, monolithic people. The all-powerful *Comité de salut public* was unable to imagine that the concrete, living, diverse people might have sincere and very genuine reasons for discontent. The oddest thing is that before the Revolution the regions of the West had been Leftward-leaning, *étaient à gauche* as we say nowadays. It took the impact of a sectarian Jacobinism to drive them to the Right—where, as is well known, they stubbornly remain to this day.

Clemenceau, a man of wit, pronounced the inanity of his life when he made his famous remark: "*La Révolution est un bloc!*" Not at all. Nothing human is all of a piece. Bloc thinking is a tyranny of words. I am convinced that it is possible to see oneself as *l'héritier de la France de 1789* without feeling obliged as a consequence to justify genocide in the Vendée and the brutal Terror of 1793 and 1794.

The Young Ionesco



I HAVE BEEN reading *Non*,¹ an early work from Ionesco's Romanian period, and I find it much more than a literary curiosity. By that I mean that it would have been worth resurrecting and reading even if the author (dreadful thought!) had died around 1940 and had not become the great French dramatist we now know.

The "No" of the title is spoken by a twenty-year-old Ionesco to the Romanian national culture of his day, but the paradox is that in rejecting it he also reveals its luxuriance. True, plenty of the sometime glories of Romanian literature, attacked by Ionesco in these critical articles first published in the early 1930s, bear names which mean nothing to most present-day readers. All the same, by virtue of what might be called "the Borges effect" Ionesco's texts can be read with that much more pure a pleasure because they deal with authors who do not exist, at any rate not for us. Their anonymity even converts them into

archetypes. As well as these, though, there are many others who are anything but obscure, and whose reputations have withstood both the passage of time and the merited blows of Ionesco. (One of these is Tudor Arghezi, the subject of a volume in Pierre Seghers's series, *Poètes d'aujourd'hui*.)

Yet through these pages, and unknown to their author, a prophet unaware, the Bucharest of the 1930s also reveals its fertility as a seedbed of future world literature. The Ionesco of *Non* is the author of *The Bald Prima Donna* in embryo. On the Romanian literary scene he rubs shoulders with a sombre, sarcastic young man called Emil Cioran; with the future and now world-famous historian of religions, Mircea Eliade; with the philosopher Benjamin Fondane, or the poet Ilarie Voronca. These polemical excursions also provide a measure of just how cosmopolitan was the cultural life of Central Europe *avant la guerre*.

The reader of *Non* will feel the absurdity of the political division of Europe in 1945, the cruelty of the cultural *apartheid* embodied in the very expression "Eastern Europe". Pre-War Europe was neither Western nor Eastern, but an intellectual and spiritual continuity, with a traffic of ideas, letters, arts and music in all directions. What we call "Western culture" reached out to or was born in Prague as in Paris, in Belgrade as in London, in Bucharest as in Warsaw.

What the book also makes clear is Ionesco's talent as a critic: the pieces written by this greenhorn for all sorts of literary reviews, surprising both in their numbers and in their quality, are no casual "squibs" but sustained analyses. Where there is venom, it is bound up with considered arguments and devastating quotations. The young Ionesco rightly intends to wring the neck of the purely impressionistic kind of criticism then flourishing. According to him, "the Romanian is idle in everyday life, lyrical in poetry, silly in politics, and impressionistic in literary criticism. . . ." When he rejects the sham grandeur, what he aptly styles "the muscular epic", in Arghezi's work, we see what he is getting at immediately, with the help of his eye for the telling quotation. Yet the Ionesco who has just been harsh about a writer may straight away admit, with hardly a pause for breath, that upon rereading the work he has also been struck by some extraordinary beauties. Thus torn, he confesses:

"So as to be at peace with myself, I therefore see only one possibility: to write two utterly contradictory articles."

Ionesco is already breaking out from behind Eugène. . . .

We find him too in the hilarious and lugubrious pages in which he portrays the quarrels of the Romanian literary world in the 1930s, which are those of all such worlds in every era. The story of the evening during which Camil Petrescu tries to persuade him not to publish an unfavourable review of his latest novel "because it will cause a lot of tittle-tattle" is certainly the best chapter (perhaps due, indirectly, to Petrescu).

Non is the most unexpected literary pleasure of our Paris publishing season, and also the illustration of this thought by the novice iconoclast: "We can only realise ourselves by self-sacrifice."

J.-F.R.

¹ *Non*. By EUGÈNE IONESCO. Translated and annotated by MARIE-FRANCE IONESCO. Gallimard.

Booker 1986

By Anthony Thwaite



THOUGH I'M a hardened old fiction-reviewer, I don't think I had quite taken in just what chairing the Booker Prize judges would involve when I accepted the invitation last April. I knew it would require me to read a lot of books, but not 127 of them—a record Booker entry. I knew that the job would have to be done in a concentrated period, but not that two months partly and three months wholly would be dominated by it. I knew that there was bound to be a degree of interest and comment in the papers and elsewhere, but not that the gossip columnists would swarm round it as persistently as a cloud of midges, and sometimes as poisonously as a posse of horseflies.

Now that it's all over, the pleasures again begin to outweigh the pains, as indeed they did for much of this year's reading-marathon. I have never been a novelist, will never be one, and have no ambitions in that direction. But for very many years I have needed *injections* of fiction almost every day. I almost always have a novel beside me, new or old, or sometimes both. Reviewing new fiction, in this case "judging" new fiction—both of which mean that I'm paid for what I do (though not in any very handsome way)—is a matter of adding a bonus to what would in any case be both a

pleasure and a necessity. I think I have no preconceptions about what a novel is, or should be. My favourite novels are *Middlemarch* and *Ulysses*. Something in me seems to need, not necessarily "stories", but fictions.

This year's Booker 127 (which included a few called in by individual judges, as well as the regulation four from each publisher) might indicate some mid-1980s preoccupations and fashions. There was a persistent current of Victorian pastiches, from the magisterial *An Insular Possession* (Timothy Mo) to much more comfortable and much less incisive attempts to use those days and those narrative manners. Related to this, there were several Raj (and associated areas) fictions, of a kind that sometimes looked simply opportunist—attempts to get in on the prize-winning Ruth Praver Jhabvala / J. G. Farrell / Paul Scott / Salman Rushdie act.

There were stodgy political sagas, often set in continental Europe in the 1950s and 1940s, but sometimes contemporary. There were thrillers, run-of-the-genre and otherwise. There were neo-Gothic turgidities, in dark landscapes. There were rancid future-fables which seemed to mix *A Clockwork Orange* with what has been called the "genital herpes" school of fiction. There was the conscientiously avant-garde, in various reach-me-down uniforms, from the games-playing kind, clever rather than interesting, in which the author has a lot to say about how he or she is telling the tale, to novels that played larkishly about with historical-fiction conventions, with a lot of strenuous "bawdy", anachronism, and so forth.

There was a great deal of sex. Some of it was what a fellow-judge called "willy-wagglers" (i.e. pushy attempts at the erotic). Some were, conversely, anaphrodisiac enough to put one off the whole business for ever. There were a number of female studies of sado-masochism, often harrowing, sometimes impressive, but also occasionally making me feel that the glum author wanted to keep her doctrinaire cake but eat the crumbs of her willy-wagging royalties as well.

But throughout, among all the vain pretensions, the disappointments, the ineptitude, the boredom, there often emerged a surprise, a delight. There were some very striking first or second novels by young writers. There were excellent novels, not finally on the short-list, from India, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Australia, New Zealand, and from several parts of the Caribbean. The judges could easily have produced an impressive and readable short list of 20 or 25. (My own "long" short list would have included Julian Barnes, John Bowen, David Cook, Robert Edric, Anne Fine, Christopher Hope, P. D. James, Stanley Middleton, R. K. Narayan, and Caryl Phillips, simply to list alphabetically ten runners I much enjoyed.) But we were held by the current terms of the Prize management committee, which dictates "not more than six and not less than three of the outstanding books. . . ."

EARLY ON in my reading, before the activity became my sole and obsessive task, I had the time to try to put the fiction of 1986 in perspective: I looked up the fiction titles of 1886, and thought about them. There was some interesting trove here,

THE BOOKER PRIZE FOR FICTION was founded in 1969 by Booker, the international food and agriculture business, and from the beginning has been administered by the National Book League (now known as the Book Trust). The prize is currently worth £15,000. The chairman of the panel and the judges are selected each year by a management committee, made up of representatives of Booker, publishers, literary agents, booksellers, librarians, academics, and writers. Entries are open to "full length novels, written in English by a citizen of the Commonwealth, the Republic of Ireland, Pakistan and South Africa", and are submitted by book publishers, with a maximum of four allowed to each publisher.

In the past few years, the award of the Booker Prize has become the major literary event in Britain, much noticed by the media. Among the winners since 1969 have been P. H. Newby, V. S. Naipaul, J. G. Farrell, Nadine Gordimer, Stanley Middleton, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, David Storey, Paul Scott, Iris Murdoch, William Golding, Salman Rushdie, Thomas Keneally, J. M. Coetzee, Anita Brookner, and Keri Hulme.

In 1986, the chairman of the panel of five judges was ANTHONY THWAITE, poet and co-editor of *ENCOUNTER* 1973-85. The prize was given to Kingsley Amis for "The Old Devils". The other five in the short list were: Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid"; Paul Bailey's "Gabriel's Lament"; Robertson Davies's "What's Bred in the Bone"; Kazuo Ishiguro's "An Artist of the Floating World"; and Timothy Mo's "An Insular Possession".

curious juxtapositions, from a year in which—of course—many fewer novels were published than in 1886. Louisa May Alcott's *Jo's Boys* couldn't have been considered by the Booker judges, nor would it have been submitted, because the author was American—as, more significantly, was Henry James, with *The Bostonians*. But Frances Hodgson Burnett, with her *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, might well have been taken seriously by our precursors in 1886, for all the mistaken accretions the title has since accumulated. Gladstone thought it an important book, which did much to cement Anglo-American relations. The notion that it was just “a children's book” wasn't at all part of contemporary readers' consciousness.

Marie Corelli's *A Romance of Two Worlds* can perhaps be put on one side (it was the first of her many novels); and George Gissing's two 1886 titles aren't among his best. But what would the judges have done with Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*? Isn't it the 1886 equivalent of our own exotic fashions? And it still has currency, is still read and enjoyed. As for what seem to me the prime contenders of the year, there can be no doubt about their staying-power: Robert Louis Stevenson published *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and Thomas Hardy published *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. I like to think that both would have been on the 1886 short-list. But which would have won?

THIS YEAR, as perhaps in earlier years, we were asked by the management committee to pick novels which we considered would still be read in twenty years' time. It's a proper rubric, and a serious one. But how can anyone be confident? Twenty years, a hundred years. . . . No one, surely, could have predicted at the time that of the young novelists chosen by Henry James in 1913 as his hopes for the future, only one would today properly survive—and in a way that James couldn't possibly have foreseen: D. H. Lawrence. True, the present-day critic or judge or reader isn't *always* wrong: Dickens's contemporaries knew he was great, and he still is. But, just as often, time tells a different tale.

WHAT I DO FEEL, about our short-list and our winner, is that they prove the novel certainly isn't dead, as a fine and significant expression of the human condition. I also feel that, in spite of the jibes about “hype”, “ballyhoo”, etc., that go with the Booker Prize (as well as the ancillary activities of the parasites who simultaneously jeer at the prize and make a living out of telling lies about it), its existence is something about which we ought to feel glad. As recently as 1968, the year before the Booker was founded, there were articles in the press deploring the fact that in Britain we had no equivalent of France's Prix Goncourt or other prestigious prizes for fiction.

Well, now we have, and have had for some years: in fact the Booker is internationally recognised as the world's top fiction prize. Recognising that fact, and the excellence of this year's chief contenders, one can weather all the flak of “hype” and “ballyhoo”, the sneers and the lies.

Fyvel as Guardian

By Martin Esslin



I FIRST encountered Tosco Fyvel in 1941-42 when I was working, in a very junior capacity (aged 22), in the “German Service” of the BBC in Bush House. It was a strange time and a strange place. The BBC's anti-Nazi propaganda service to Hitler's Germany was staffed by a motley crowd of German and Austrian refugees. Some were extremely

distinguished, some not, and a few were downright frauds, who claimed to have been eminent in Germany but had not. These “enemy aliens” were supervised by a number of true-born Britons, deemed to be loyal by their very birth (but that was before Burgess, Maclean, Philby, Blunt, and their ilk were unmasked). Some were clever and cultivated, while many more merely claimed (often wrongly) to have a command of the German language. But this hierarchy of native-born supervisors and their alien auxiliaries was in turn supervised “from above”, and directed—at least in theory; in practice these “directives” often tended to be ignored—by a mysterious and secret body situated “somewhere in the country”. It was represented at our meetings by the brilliant, volatile, and cynically opportunist R. H. S. Crossman.

Occasionally members of this mysterious organisation—variously dubbed “PID” (Political Intelligence Department), “the country” or “the Foreign Office”—appeared among us and supplied us with commentaries and features they had written for the German Service's use. It was in this capacity that T. R. Fyvel first came into my field of vision. To me, a Viennese fledgling intellectual, still freshly exposed to the mysteries of English life and manners, he appeared the very embodiment of Englishness. Cool, detached, controlled, he seemed to be the antithesis of everything Middle-European.

Such are the ironies of national stereotypes, but such also is the immense power of the English cultural and educational mould. When Tosco had arrived in England he had been only nine years younger than I was when I came. But at the age of thirteen he had been exposed to an English school, and then Cambridge—and that, at least as far as the eyes of a more recent arrival were concerned, had done the trick. To me he appeared as quintessentially British as his colleague Norman Cameron, who was tall, stooping, and had a slight stammer, more so even than the excitable and slightly hysterical Crossman.

In the more than 40 years of our subsequent repeated contacts and friendship I, of course, became quite aware that Tosco Fyvel also had come from Central Europe; but he never lost that aura of “Englishness” for me (in spite of his preoccupation and close ties with Israel). He never talked much about his background. In the moving tribute published in the pages of this journal (ENCOUNTER, December 1985) shortly after Tosco died, and now republished as the After-

word to his “uncollected writings 1945-85”,¹ Peregrine Worsthorne made the point that it was “a pity that he never wrote a personal memoir—being far too modest and self-effacing. . . .”

Yet this book, most ably and unobtrusively compiled and edited by Catherine Carver, does represent something like an autobiography, and just the kind of autobiography so modest and self-effacing a man *would* produce: a few chapters of memoirs left unfinished when he died, giving glimpses of his childhood and youth; a number of essays and articles about places and events that he wrote as he returned from assignments abroad; a sequence of “diary” entries from his column in *Tribune* in 1948; pen-portraits of some of the heroes of his life; and a number of reflective pieces on political and sociological aspects of his time which vividly illustrate the way he thought about the world he lived in.

It all adds up to a surprisingly rounded biographical and intellectual self-portrait, doubly authentic and life-like precisely because it is so spontaneous and unintended, lacking all self-conscious presentational artifice.

AND IT IS, indeed, a fascinating and unusual life-story. Born in 1907 in Cologne, he lived in Strasbourg—still an outpost of Imperial Germany—from 1912 to 1914; then he moved to Zurich, where he received what he felt was his decisively formative schooling in a Swiss outlook of down-to-earth classlessness and “liberal” pragmatism; and finally he arrived in England at the age of thirteen, to be shaped by an English public school and Cambridge.

Tosco’s father, Berthold Feiwei (Tosco later Englished the spelling of the name) came from Vienna; he had been a rising poet and writer in the city’s *fin-de-siècle* literary movement, when, under the influence of the vicious anti-Semitic agitation that then shook Vienna (under Schönerer and Lueger, those forerunners and ideological mentors of Hitler) he decided that he did not want to be another “German” poet, and began to devote himself to “the revival of a truly Jewish culture”. He became one of the promoters of a Jewish/Yiddish literary renaissance; joined Chaim Weitzmann and Martin Buber in Switzerland; ran a Jewish publishing house in Berlin; edited a Jewish literary paper in the Rhineland (where Tosco was born); but, finally, to keep his growing family, took a job with a bank in Strasbourg and later Zurich. After the end of the First World War he rejoined Weitzmann in England to work for the Zionist cause. Tosco’s mother (whom his father had met in Geneva) came from Russia, the rebellious and “liberated” daughter of a rabbi. Tosco describes, in brief, deft strokes, how his parents’ marriage went wrong. The handsome Viennese charmer was an inveterate philanderer; the earnest Russian woman, irrevocably committed to her husband, revenged herself by endlessly nagging him for being weak and dissolute.

¹ *And There My Trouble Began. Uncollected Writings 1945-85.* By T. R. FYVEL. Edited by CATHERINE CARVER. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £15.00.

So the man who to me appeared the embodiment of detached English reserve had spent his boyhood, rebellious and unhappy at home, as a member of gangs of small boys, fighting each other in the streets of Strasbourg and Zurich!

The memory of this street life of his boyhood obviously played its part in leading him to write what still remains the classic study of the Teddy-boys of the post-War period: *The Insecure Offenders* (1961), a truly seminal piece of humane sociology.

IN THE 1930s Tosco Fyvel spent some time in mandated Palestine, working (as he says) for the Zionist *apparatus* (he was personal assistant at one time to Golda Meir), and wrote an important and in many ways prophetic book, *No Ease in Zion* (1938) which warned against the dangers of alienating the Palestinian Arabs and advocated a state of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews. But because this book was not in tune with the prevailing ideas among the Zionist establishment he returned to England shortly before the War of 1939. It was while working for Fredric Warburg—editing a series of books dealing with “War Aims”, shortly after World War II broke out—that Tosco Fyvel met George Orwell, whom he had persuaded to write one of the books in the series: *The Lion and the Unicorn*.

Orwell became Tosco’s friend and hero. The other hero he worshipped was Orde Wingate, that strange eccentric officer whom he had met in Palestine in the ’30s, the English Puritan (he came from a family of Plymouth Brethren) who had become a fanatical defender of the Jews while serving in Palestine, later almost singlehandedly drove the Italians from Abyssinia, and ultimately perished while leading the irregular British forces in Burma. Tosco wrote a fine book of reminiscences about Orwell, and there is a short but equally fine pen-portrait of Wingate in this volume.

These two personalities, I feel, embodied for Tosco Fyvel the quintessence of the Englishness he loved—and had himself grown into. Both combined a quixotic, almost mad devotion to ideals they were ready to fight and die for, with an utter refusal to follow any party line, or any prefabricated solutions. They always insisted on thinking everything out for themselves from the most basic factual premises, and were never afraid of the unorthodox solutions they reached.

Tosco worked with Orwell on *Tribune* in the 1940s, and succeeded him as literary editor. But his refusal to follow any ideological line prevented him, much as he sympathised with the socialist ideals of the paper at the time, from becoming trapped within the predictable ideology the paper came to represent at a later stage. Some of the articles collected in this volume show Tosco’s disillusionment with the bleakness of Labour’s post-War Britain, as much as they reveal his disaffection from the affluent society that emerged from Harold Macmillan’s “you’ve-never-had-it-so-good” era. His Orwellian distaste for a hedonistic consumer society, stoked up by advertising (especially after the coming of a commercial television channel), his disquiet about the apathy of workers and the ineptitude of management in Britain in an era of galloping inflation emerge from a number of the pieces in this

volume, and show him to have been not only far ahead of his time but quite prophetic as well.

THE WRITINGS HERE ASSEMBLED, which constitute an intellectual self-portrait, however randomly they may have originated, make one realise that T. R. Fyvel was more than merely a clever and talented journalist. Read together with his books on the Middle East, War Aims, Juvenile Delinquents, and the Problems of the Intellectual, they show him as a surprising, if unacademic, sociological and political thinker, and a humanistic essayist of originality and penetration.

He was, moreover, a fine writer with an unforced, free-flowing style. Those who knew him recognise his quiet, smilingly sceptical, conversational tone in his writing, can hear his voice with its kindly ironical inflections rising up

from the printed page. The man emerges from his writings.

And, indeed, what this volume of posthumously collected papers shows, above all, is the self-portrait of a good and wise man. Tosco Fyvel's influence, considerable as it was when he exercised it as a literary editor of *Tribune* and later (from 1973 to 1983) of the *Jewish Chronicle*, or as a script-writer and editor at the BBC (and, incidentally, as one of the founders of ENCOUNTER), was far greater through the sheer force of his helpfulness and sympathetic openness of mind to those who came to him for advice and active support. He was like one of the "guardians" that T. S. Eliot put in his play *The Cocktail Party*: people you meet at parties and who appear to be merely casual guests, but who unobtrusively, behind the scenes, watch over their friends unnoticed, and perhaps unthanked, to help them order their lives. It is good to have at least a reflection of so rare and radiant a personality shining through the pages of this book.

Everyone is the King of the Castle (almost)

Enter every situation like Prince Charles, our energetic future monarch:
Wholly part of it, *andante spiritoso*.
In ringing air, crunch across the cornflakes in the woods:

The lolling violet tongue of the dog!
Or listen to the silence,
Snow's anointing lullaby.

Watch the majestic—pram-imprisoned—baby
Shave: ice-cream lathering cheeks & chin.
Inspect a cloud, & share its shape with someone:

Being in love brings one to one's senses
Like a wedding ring. (This animated, sleeping marble
Is all mine!)

Sometimes, with you, it seemed almost paradise.
My serpent was your son
Who, outlawed from our kingdom,

Wanted to banish me. Poor uncrowned monarch.
What could have been a circle to include him twisted into an ellipse;
Our parental-seeming lenses lunatic, distorting.

Sometimes, with you, it was almost paralysis;
An empty, throbbing tap.
Now I, a widening ring in water, drift out to sea;

The cloud has not yet burst;
And on the shore I see you two—
With spade & space & seagull-sniffing dog—

Building your sun-striped castles in the sand.
This, too, is paradise: a sad one.

James Greene

BOOKS & WRITERS

The Sexual Contract

Rousseau's Republicans & Matriarchs—By MAURICE CRANSTON



AT A TIME when the idea of democracy was out of favour, Jean-Jacques Rousseau was generally regarded as one of its great theorists; when, after the First World War, democracy became fashionable, Rousseau was promptly said to be its enemy, a forerunner of communism and fascism. Mr James Miller has set out in *Rousseau: Dreamer of Democracy*,¹ his latest book, to restore the earlier image,

or, more precisely, to offer new grounds for considering Rousseau a true democrat, a theorist who both redefined the concept of democracy and infused his readers with a desire for that form of rule. Mr Miller's book is closely argued, and is a good deal more convincing than the books which have represented Rousseau as totalitarian; but it is not without flaws of its own.

Rousseau did not use the word "democracy" often. Michael Launay in his *Vocabulaire politique de Jean-Jacques Rousseau* counts nine uses of "démocratie", six uses of "démocratique", and one use of "démocratiquement" in the whole of Rousseau's political writings. Rousseau's one use of the adverb is particularly memorable. "If there were a people of Gods", he writes in *The Social Contract*, "they would govern themselves democratically. A government so perfect does not suit men." This remark can, however, easily mislead the reader who does not notice that Rousseau distinguishes government in the sense of executive and administrative decision-making, of the kind that was attempted by the people of Athens, from legislation. While he proposed that people should make their laws, he did not wish to see them undertake the utopian enterprise of actually running the country.

The passage in which Rousseau's attitude to democracy is best explained is a work commonly dismissed as empty rhetoric, the Dedication to the Sovereign Lords of Geneva which prefaces his *Discourse on Inequality*. In those pages Rousseau names as the political order he would most wish to live in "a wisely-tempered democracy"; and he points to the city-state of Geneva as an example of such an ideal system. If

these words are to be taken seriously (as I think they should be) they leave little doubt about Rousseau's position, provided we understand how Geneva was governed and how Rousseau (who had seen very little of the place since he was a child) imagined that Geneva was governed. Mr Miller, unlike most commentators on Rousseau's politics, at least seeks to make these things clear.

The Constitution of Geneva, as Calvin had formulated it in the 16th century, was a discreet mixture of democratic, aristocratic, and theocratic elements—the citizens assembling in person to vote on laws, the magistrates conducting the business of the state, and the clergy controlling the private and social behaviour of the citizens. It was not unlike the construction depicted in Rousseau's most famous work, *The Social Contract*, and it was the constitution he exalted in the Dedication of his *Discourse on Inequality*. However, all the evidence shows that Calvin's Constitution was no longer actually in force or respected in Geneva in Rousseau's lifetime; the government of the republic had fallen into the hands of an hereditary patriciate, and the citizens (themselves diminished to a minority of the people) were assembled only to rubber-stamp the edicts of their magistrates. There was a big difference between republican façade and the oligarchic reality.

Had Rousseau realised the extent of Geneva's decay by the year 1754, when he wrote the *Discourse on Inequality*, into an aristocratic despotism disguised as a republic, he would not have called it "a wisely-tempered democracy", and indeed when he did wake up to the realities of the situation and published ten years later his *Letters from the Mountains*, he called the régime of Geneva a tyranny worse than any of the ancient world. However, Rousseau was above all else a man of imagination, as Mr Miller observes, although in calling him a "dreamer" he would seem to be overlooking the rational order which Rousseau imposed on his imagination. Rousseau could see in the original Constitution of Calvin's republic a model for the solution of a problem that tormented all men everywhere: how to be at the same time ruled and free. The solution was for men to make for themselves the rules under which they lived.

Is that democracy? Only once did Rousseau speak of it as such. The word he preferred, and habitually used, was "sovereignty". Mr Miller says Rousseau "redefined sovereignty in terms of democracy", but this is not well expressed: what Rousseau did was to separate sovereignty from government—

¹ *Rousseau: Dreamer of Democracy*. By JAMES MILLER. Yale University Press, \$27.50, £27.50, paper \$8.95, £8.95.

sovereignty being strictly the enactment of legislation, and government being the general administration of the laws and the execution of public business. Rousseau assigned sovereignty to the people and government to the magistrates. He did not “redefine” sovereignty—he proposed a democratic form of sovereignty (much as Calvin had), and further proposed that it should exist together with an aristocratic form of government. This was democracy “wisely tempered”; although any reader of *The Social Contract* must be struck by the extent of “tempering” which Rousseau demands. In *The Social Contract* the people do, assuredly, “make” the laws under which they live, but they need a Lawgiver, possessing the wisdom they themselves lack, to draw up the table of laws which they vote into operation. They are *les législateurs*, but he is *le Législateur*. Clearly, this is as much a democracy wisely led as a democracy wisely tempered.

Up to a point, Mr Miller is right. Rousseau brought the people into the picture as they had never been before. His idea of the nation sovereign over itself had an enormous appeal to the public at a time when the charisma of kings was wearing thin, and when the yearning for freedom had become everywhere more articulate. Even as a person—or personality—Jean-Jacques, with his proud plebeian pose, seemed (not least in the *salons* of his countesses and duchesses) to be the authentic voice of the democratic classes. No one can dispute the hold he had over the minds of the French Revolutionaries and their successors. He has been perhaps the most widely read and admired of all modern political theorists. That does not mean, however, that he has been the best understood.

THERE IS A WIDESPREAD NOTION—echoed in Mr Miller’s book—that Rousseau’s free society is composed not simply of citizens but of “patriarchal households”, where wives and children submit willingly to the head of the family. The wrong-headedness of this reading is forcefully demonstrated in Joel Schwartz’s remarkable book *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*,² which brings out the extent to which Rousseau’s conception of the family is matriarchal: men should rule the world, he urges, but women should rule men.

In contrast to modern feminists, Rousseau attaches the utmost importance to the difference between the sexes. Men and women, he suggests, were alike when they lived in the state of nature which existed—or “must have existed”—before societies were formed; but that equality ceased when settled relationships began. In remote savage times, males and females alike roamed the forest as solitary beings, the males occasionally meeting, copulating with, and promptly separating from the females, who were left to breed their young unaided. It was only when individuals left the solitary state of nature to live in huts, or caves, with others that they began to experience companionship and to be together long

enough for a man to discover what it meant to be a father and for sentiments of affection to arise between mates. “The habit of living together”, says Rousseau, “gave rise to the sweetest sentiments known to man, conjugal love and paternal love.” But the institution of the family also marked for Rousseau the loss of men’s—and women’s—independence.

As Professor Schwartz explains it:

“The family puts an end to their freedom. Within its confines human beings come to depend on one another sexually. This is most obvious in the case of females. Women bear more children and are more preoccupied with the raising of these children. They are therefore less capable of providing for and protecting themselves, and hence more reliant on their spouses’ assistance.”

Women grow weaker in the context of the family, but men do not become stronger. And yet, as Rousseau describes the evolution of the human race, he sees this very early stage of social relationships—the epoch of “nascent society”, as he calls it—as “the golden age” of human history. The next developments spoil it; and sex plays a key role in those developments.

Rousseau argues that sexual desires are weak in the state of nature because they are like those of animals, directed to any available object. In the social state, sexual desires become stronger as they come to be concentrated on a chosen person. As a result, there emerges not only conjugal love, but romantic love, a violent passion which breeds as much jealousy as joy. Sex, a trivial thing in the state of nature, serves from the earliest stages of civilisation both to unite human beings in mutual desire and to divide them in bitter rivalry.

Romantic love has its evolutionary role. While conjugal love keeps the individual within his own little family, romantic love carries him into a larger world. It is “political”, Professor Schwartz suggests, because it reflects individual dissatisfaction with the status quo and leads to the creation of peoples as distinct from mere families; “but no sooner does it do so than it threatens the very maintenance of the solidarity whose existence it makes possible.” It does this because each person’s demand for priority brings him into collision with others.

LOVE, ACCORDING TO ROUSSEAU, is cultivated and promoted by women as an instrument of their purposes. Why is this? Rousseau’s argument is that women, weakened as they become domesticated, and dependent on men to an extent that men are not dependent on women, have to use cunning to make men stay attached to them. Each woman must make a man love her enough to shelter and protect her, choose and keep her as his cherished mate. For women to make men as dependent on them as they are dependent on men, women must dominate men, and dominate them by devious manoeuvres and manipulations since they cannot dominate them by force. As Rousseau puts it in his *Discourse on Inequality*, “Love is extolled by women in order to establish their ascendancy and make dominant the sex that ought to obey.”

² *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. By JOEL SCHWARTZ. University of Chicago Press, \$17.00, £14.50; paper \$7.95, £6.25.

REMARKS SUCH AS this may well make Rousseau sound like a champion of the patriarchal family; but they need to be read in their context. It is in society, and especially in political society, that he thinks women should obey. He is content that they should dominate the home. In the *Discourse on Inequality* he laments the fact that women have achieved what he calls an unnatural predominance in civilisation, but he does not explain it. Professor Schwartz suggests that we must look to *Emile* and the *Letter to Monsieur d'Alembert* to unravel Rousseau's theory of female ascendancy.

In those pages Rousseau claims that sexual desire in the male is naturally less intense than in the female, so that females have to stimulate it in the male they wish to attract. They do so by making themselves mysterious and playing hard to get. This strategy is seen by Rousseau as advantageous to everyone. When women are chaste, the males are not only spared the ordeal of being devoured by the females' voracious sexual appetite ("dragged to death", in Rousseau's lurid phrase), they are also "civilised", that is, trained in the arts of pleasing women. Once the male's sexual desire has been elevated to a ruling passion, and the female refuses to satisfy that passion unless the male does a great many tricks to earn his reward, then it becomes as important for men to study how to please women as it is already imperative for women to study how to please men. As Rousseau puts it in *Emile*:

"A law of nature causes man to depend on woman's wish, and constrains him to please her in turn, so that she will consent to let him be the stronger."

One of the reasons why sexual desire is weak in the state of nature is that there are enough females in the forest and no limit to the mating season. This situation of abundance is altered in society by the introduction of female modesty.

AS PROFESSOR SCHWARTZ observes, modesty is regarded by Rousseau as a somewhat bogus virtue, but one very necessary to the female if she is to transform the male's weak lust into a strong passionate love. Modesty is unnatural—it goes against the female's sexual nature—but it is suggested to women by Nature, together with shame "to arm the weak in order that they shall enslave the strong." Here we meet the two senses of "nature" in Rousseau: by original nature, females are immodest and shameless; in the social context, second nature propels them towards modesty and shame. The ambiguity of these impulses is reflected in their actual behaviour.

In *La nouvelle Héloïse* Rousseau satisfied his female readers that he understood their predicament. Torn in two directions at once, modern woman found it hard to be chaste. Religion was there to help her: but Rousseau was sceptical about its efficacy. "A young and beautiful girl will never shed tears before God for being a coveted object." Pride was more effective as a motive in making women chaste. "When a woman sees the whole world at her feet, she triumphs over all and over herself." Thus woman's chastity is ensured by her desire to dominate—to rule men and rule the world.

Men and Angels

Mary Gordon's
chilling novel of the
bitter limits of love



Wise as serpents,
innocent as doves,
Laura had been sent to Anne
to save her

'A domestic drama of morals with a
horrifying climax... Compellingly readable'
—Sunday Times

£2.95



Rousseau deplores what he believes to have come about in the modern world—that women have been able to satisfy this extravagant desire to rule. He points to France and says that men, in order to please the women who hold them in thrall, have become as effeminate as the women themselves. In Paris, that sophisticated city which others seek to imitate, boys are brought up to be “young ladies in jerkins” and men, “unable to make themselves men, are turned by women into women”.

ROUSSEAU HAS more than one explanation for this. First, he suggests that the gothic invaders destroyed the Roman system of separating the sexes, and introduced both licentiousness and fantasies of chivalry into sexual relationships. Secondly, he argues (with Machiavelli) that Christianity has undermined virility by making virtues of meekness and other-worldliness. Christianity, he claims, first subordinated conjugal love to love of divine beings and then made matters worse by imposing duties of marriage so excessive as to be impracticable and even ridiculous: “Christianity has denigrated both love of country and love of spouses in the name of the love of God . . . the result has been to promote the love of mistresses.” Again France is Rousseau’s example—France where the men are foppish slaves of women in society, and of a despot (who is himself the slave of a woman) in the state.

As a contrast to this regiment of women in the kingdom where he lived, Rousseau pointed to the sexual relations which prevailed in the republic where he was born. Again we

must note what he says in his Dedication of his *Discourse on Inequality*:

“Lovable and virtuous women of Geneva—the duty of your sex will always be to govern ours. Happy are we that your chaste power, exercised solely within the matrimonial union, makes itself felt for the glory of the state and the happiness of the public. It was thus that the women commanded at Sparta.”

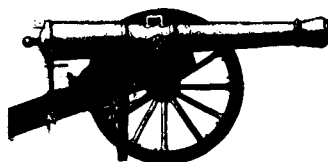
Professor Schwartz shows how the model of Sparta came to be added to Geneva in the construction of Rousseau’s ideal state. Spartan women knew that their duty was to rear citizens for the state, rather than aspire to be citizens themselves. Citizenship, as Rousseau understands it, is alien to women’s nature. No woman can be relied on to put the interests of the state before the interests of the children she has carried in her womb; no woman can be asked to bear arms in battle: she is too fragile and too precious as a mother of citizens.

Women’s skill lies in the use of hidden, personal, subtle power. Politics demands impersonal, rational legislation and open forthright utterance: it is a man’s job. The abilities of each sex, as Rousseau sees them, are distinct: man is the arm, woman the eye of the partnership. If everything is in its place, there will be no confusion of roles: the public is man’s domain, the private woman’s.

The Rousseau we meet in Professor Schwartz’s book is no less a republican than the Rousseau that Mr Miller depicts, but he is much more the social scientist than the ideologue or “the dreamer”.

Men at War

Soldiers & Civilians—By M. R. D. Foot



HOMO SAPIENS is an aggressive species; some of its aggression has always been vented on its own kind. Several recent books bear this out.

Arther Ferrill is able to show, from neolithic cave drawings, that war goes back well before datable history began; he maintains indeed that “organised warfare appeared at least by the end of the Palaeolithic Age”.¹ New Stone Age Jericho, built in the ninth and eighth millennia B.C., was fortified with a stone wall all round it, nearly 30 feet high. Well before the Trojan war, Egyptian pharaohs commanded armies of over 20,000 men, as large as the English army at Crecy or the French at Agincourt. Professor Ferrill traces two ancient military traditions—the combination of light infantry

and cavalry worked out by Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Persian monarchs, and the heavy infantry (hoplites) developed in Greece—and shows how Philip and his son Alexander of Macedon fused the two into an unbeatable army. His elegant and most readable book ends with Alexander the Great, “a hero whom even rationalist historians can admire unabashedly”. Alexander died in 323 B.C., before his thirty-third birthday. Ferrill cannot resist a few later analogies, including a map of the battlefield of Waterloo that shows Napoleon’s front there to have been no larger than Alexander’s at Issus. He even speculates that in hand-to-hand fighting the Macedonian phalanx would have given Wellington’s army more trouble than Napoleon’s Old Guard.

Gwynne Dyer, a Canadian journalist living in London with a doctorate in war studies and a senior teaching post at Sandhurst behind him, has written a book with an even wider survey: a study of war right through from ancient Egypt to the nuclear age.² It is tied in with a television series, and amply illustrated. War, largely a matter of movement, is not readily

¹ *The Origins of War, from the Stone Age to Alexander the Great.* By ARTHUR FERRILL. Thames and Hudson, £12.50, paper £5.95.

² *War.* By GWYNNE DYER. The Bodley Head, £15.00.

captured on still photographs, even by a Robert Capa; in any case, the camera was invented after the start of the Industrial Revolution, which has transformed war as well as so much else. War has now moved beyond the reach even of the astounding abilities Alexander displayed, as weapons and devices he never knew multiply; indeed Dyer maintains that it has now become so dangerous that humankind must stop it, or else be destroyed by it. Next to this vital point, his most important statement, often repeated, is that war has always been part of the human condition, as much a part of it as weather. If we believe that the state of peace, for which all sensible men and women long, is normal, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: it is unusual, abnormal; it requires a special effort to create and sustain it. If we do not now make that special effort, we are doomed. He would command more respect from historians if he had corrected an unlucky misprint, which misdates the battle of Waterloo; but a misprint cannot blur his evident sincerity.

Richard Holmes, who is a senior lecturer at Sandhurst, has written another book with a broad sweep; not quite so broad as Ferrill's or Dyer's, but covering several centuries with learning lightly worn.³ He sets out to understand and to describe what he has never himself experienced—what men feel and how they behave in battle. Not only has he read unusually widely, in psychology as well as history; he has cross-questioned combatants from both this century's world wars, and from Korea, Viet Nam, the Arab-Israeli wars, and the Falklands. He mixes what he has read, what he has heard, and what he has thought, with cogency and skill, to build up a credible picture of how men behave under the stresses of training and of combat.

He recognises the role of noise as one of the extra horrors of the modern battlefield; though he touches also on that battlefield's surprising emptiness. He might perhaps have said more about an aspect of battle that it is too easy to forget unless one has encountered it: the lack of *sleep*. Wilfred Owen's "shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells" chanted on, sometimes for weeks on end—and, as Holmes observes, often with little fatal result: though they might hit nobody, they kept their own side and their enemy alarmed and awake. Napoleon once boasted that he used to sleep during battles; to do so needed napoleonic strength of character, in the artillery duels of later great wars. Lack of sleep brings lack of judgment; no wonder so many mistakes get made by men at war.

PROFESSOR FOTION and Dr Elfstrom, who teach at Emory, Atlanta, have written a book on how military judgments ought to be formed, establishing "guidelines for peace and war"—their subtitle—from ethical theory rather than combatant practice.⁴ They proclaim themselves utilitarians,

followers of R. M. Hare rather than of Jeremy Bentham. (Hare's career included over two years as prisoner of the Japanese, with service on the infamous Burma-Siam railway; so he at least knows something of their subject.) They have taken trouble to master modern diplomatic as well as military history, and to look into the morality of the inter-continental ballistic missile as well as the arrow, the bullet, the mine, and the shell. Their book is jargon-free and easy to read, even if it only seeks to lay down guidelines, rather than hard-and-fast rules. Circumstances alter cases; and though *Military Ethics* does not carry, as *Firing Line* does, the immediate feel of war—the mixed stench of burnt explosives, dead bodies, chloride of lime and excreta—it gives its readers a great many ideas.

PROFESSOR COHEN'S AIM in *Citizens and Soldiers*⁵ is narrower, though he treats it from an almost equally wide range of study. He is a politics don at Harvard, and tackles the problem of how the United States ought to recruit its armed forces. He breaks away from the politicians' and staff officers' preoccupation with current recruiting figures to ask such basic questions as: what does America need armed forces for? what lessons can be learned from the ways other states recruit? He points out that the USA as a world power is now placed much as Great Britain was 75 years ago: needing to be ready both to sustain a major war to support allies on the European continent, then as now the key to control of the world, and also to conduct small wars wherever there is a threat to some minor but telling interest, either of prestige or of economics. He distinguishes also the strong Anglo-Saxon libertarian strain in American political history, that abhors compulsion of any sort, from the contradictory impulses towards equality that are now a commonplace of the democratic Left, both sides of the Atlantic. "The free man does not wish to become a soldier; the democratic man abhors unequal burdens; the military man would like to ignore their claims, but cannot."

He ranges as widely as his subject deserves over the history of the past couple of centuries, and has a firm grasp of the various schemes industrial societies have used to man their armies. Victor Kiernan once suggested that the object of late 19th-century conscription was to accustom young men to obey orders, thus making them obedient tools of capitalist management on the factory floor after they had done their conscript training; this may indeed have been so, but modern conscription was originated by Carnot in revolutionary France, still primarily an agricultural country, and now exists in its most rigid form in nominally anti-capitalist Russia.

Cohen's solution to the American problem is daring: he advocates a plan put forward by Washington and Hamilton at the end of the Revolutionary war, for a universal citizens' militia. It was not implemented then, and would call now for marvellous efforts of insight and of propaganda; it might all the same provide an adequate answer to America's various defence dilemmas. Sometimes the Anglo-Saxon can sigh for the simplifications of pre-Conquest England, from Alfred's day to Harold's; every fit man knew it was his duty to serve,

³ *Firing Line*. By RICHARD HOLMES. Jonathan Cape, £12.95.

⁴ *Military Ethics*. By N. FOTION and G. ELFSTROM. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £15.95.

⁵ *Citizens and Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service*. By ELIOT A. COHEN. Cornell Studies in Security Affairs. Cornell University Press, \$22.50, £16.00.

at the King's command, in the fyrd to defend his own county.

The late Richard Simpkin, instead of looking back, looked forward.⁶ He fought with distinction in the Western Desert, where he was captured; rose through the Staff College to a senior post among the Ministry of Defence's armoured-vehicle designers; and then ran a language consultancy. He allied a sharp brain and a keen wit to his comprehension of the probable shape of battle, if the worst comes to the worst, on the north European plain; and was enough of a polymath to combine physics, psychology and statistics with military science. He understood, only too well, the uses and abuses that fighting men can make of computers:

"... however strong an impression of original thought it may give, a computer is in fact incapable of creative synthesis. It does what it has been told to very well, and performs the tricks it has been taught very nicely. *But no way can it 'pull something out of the bag' when faced with the unexpected.*"

While he attributed devastating possibilities of technical advance to the Russians, he was aware of their major military weaknesses as well—too few reliable senior NCOs, and too many junior officers with no initiative. Among the bugbears he conjures up is a striking force composed of light armoured vehicles, carried anywhere in the world by vast submarines and put ashore close to vital targets by helicopter.

Like all sound strategists he admired Sun Tzu, the Chinese philosopher who laid down the art of war—probably in Alexander the Great's lifetime; he also had strong sympathies with Admiral Mahan, the apostle of sea power. He quotes one remark of Mahan's that remains painfully apposite:

"To prepare for war in time of peace is impracticable to commercial representative nations, because the people in general will not give sufficient heed to military necessities, or to international problems, to feel the pressure which induces readiness."

Another book that looks forward over the edge of next century—dangerous sport—is Kenneth Macksey's *Technology in War*.⁷ This is a military historian's excellent illustrated account of the impact of invention on war, since Watt's steam engine triggered off the Industrial Revolution.

Following a suggestion of Martin Bronkhorst, Macksey has sketched, in a few paragraphs for each, the history of every major war since 1776, and explained how its conduct was governed by the existing state of weapons—and of communications. Ferrill wondered what Alexander would have made of gunpowder; Macksey leaves one glad that Napoleon did not have the electric telegraph (though he had the semaphore) to coordinate his armies' moves, nor the railway train in which to move troops. Yet in 1914, with train and telegraph combined, even the German General Staff could not quite manage the colossal envelopment of the French they had intended; soldiers will go on making mistakes.

NEARER HOME, two books bear out the mistakes soldiers—and their terrorist opponents—make in that corner of the United Kingdom which, since 1969, has left the British with a sense of not being quite at peace: Northern Ireland. Colonel Dewar gives the army's point of view about the current troubles, writing as one who has commanded an infantry battalion on the spot: taken the responsibilities, received the brickbats, ordered the arrests.⁸ Desmond Hamill, a former officer, has also had much experience in Ulster, as ITN's chief reporter there; he too seeks to give the army's point of view, ranging more widely into politics—both in Whitehall, and south of the border.⁹ Both agree that the army was called into the Protestant-Catholic dispute in the Six Counties in 1969 because the local police could no longer hold the two sides apart; both describe in detail some of the ructions since. Dewar's illustrations, even more plentiful than Hamill's, are excellent. Both books deserve—but are unlikely to get—study by the IRA's supporters in the United States, who are all for driving the Protestants out of the Six Counties and do not accept the corollary: that they should hand back the northern Middle West to the Sioux, and Alabama to the Cherokee.

J. M. Brereton, another survivor from that ghastly Burma-Siam railway, tackles the British army from the blunt end rather than the sharp; he has written a brief social history of it, from Charles II's day to Elizabeth II's.¹⁰ He describes how, over three centuries and a quarter, other ranks' status in the army has grown from being the last refuge of the destitute to being a technical trade, like any other: except that, in it, men have to face the prospect of being called on to kill other men. This is something they often refuse to do; S. L. A. Marshall, the American scholar, established that only one in seven of all the American infantrymen who served overseas in 1941-45

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⁶ *Race to the Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-First Century Warfare*. By RICHARD E. SIMPKIN. Brassey's Defence Publishers, £25.00.

⁷ *Technology in War: The Impact of Science on Weapon Development and Modern Battle*. By KENNETH MACKSEY. Arms and Armour Press, £12.95.

⁸ *The British Army in Northern Ireland*. By LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MICHAEL DEWAR, RGJ. Arms and Armour Press, £19.95.

⁹ *Pig in the Middle: The Army in Northern Ireland 1969-1984*. By DESMOND HAMILL. Methuen, £12.95.

¹⁰ *The British Soldier: A Social History from 1661 to the Present Day*. By J. M. BRERETON. The Bodley Head, £10.95.

ever fired a hand-held weapon in action at all.¹¹ They had heard too often the injunction, "Thou shalt not kill". To judge from Brereton's account, British infantry were less squeamish; but he deals far more with living conditions, food (or the lack of it), clothing, and accoutrements, than with acts of war.

Julian Lider, a Swedish scholar with several books under his belt already, deals with the officer corps rather than with other ranks; and with the intelligentsia among the officer corps at that.¹² Such a body was unheard-of a century ago, when my grandfather learned at Sandhurst the motto:

*Fear God, honour the Queen,
Shoot straight, and keep clean*

and believed it held the core of soldiering, if not of generalship as well. During this century's two World Wars, the need for strategic appreciations, careful studies of what could and what could not be done, became only too apparent. Lider explains, dispassionate as a surgeon, how the British military leaders got used after 1945 to the idea that Great Britain was no longer a world power; how, nevertheless, they insisted that their country should at least enter, and then remain in, "the nuclear club"—thinking the unthinkable as best they could; and how willingly they bound themselves into NATO, on which the country's security depends now that the Grand Fleet has long ago gone for scrap. As a good book should, Lider's raises more questions than it answers; it leaves its reader anxious to find out more.

To offset this run of recent publications, let this review end by welcoming the return of a classic. Frederic Manning was an Australian man of letters who served as a private in the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, all through the Somme battle of 1916 to the end of the Great War (as all his generation called it). *The Middle Parts of Fortune* came out without an author's name, in a limited edition in 1929; called *Her Privates We*, by "Private 19022", it was published in an expurgated version in 1930. He died in 1935; not until 1977 did the full text get on general sale. It has just been reprinted.¹³ In it Manning explains exactly how soldiers talk and how they feel, when they are caught up in the machine of a world war: "It 'as got to be, an' if it 'as got to be, the sooner it's over an' done wi' the better."

Of himself and his two closest companions he says, "They had been three people without a single thing in common; and yet there was no bond stronger than the necessity which had bound them together." There is a sort of mystic cement that binds private soldiers to their mates or buddies on a battlefield, and makes whole armies of them hard to break: Manning explains something of how this cement binds. His is certainly not a book for a nicely-brought-up young lady's bedside table; but it is a wonderful account of how a man can go through hell on earth, and (if he is lucky enough to survive) come out with his humanity enhanced.

¹¹ Quoted in Richard Holmes, *Firing Line*, p. 58.

¹² *British Military Thought after World War II*. By JULIAN LIDER. Gower Publishing, £25.00.

¹³ *The Middle Parts of Fortune*. By FREDERIC MANNING. Buchan & Enright, £5.95.

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It is the desire not to let one's mates down that holds most men steady, more or less, under fire. Almost everybody is frightened on first being shot at, whether with a bow and arrow or some more elaborately guided missile. The traditional sergeant-major's answer to fright is discipline: drill the men repeatedly, over and over and over again, till from force of drill-ingrained habit they stay steady, and persevere with the routine of forming two deep, arming the crossbow, loading the arquebus, levelling the pike, fusing the shell, scanning the radar, or whatever it may be.

Drill brings out another aspect of war, that none of these authors—not even Manning—deals with: its dullness. A Tommies' proverb says, quite rightly, "War is 99% boredom and 1% fright." To go into details of military tedium would be tedious indeed; but nobody should be carried away by the glamour of recorded comradeship into the belief that the life of a fighting man is not, for the greater part of his time, exceedingly dull. Civilians respect soldiers for encountering danger on their behalf; they can respect them for also encountering boredom.

Forbidden Words

The Politics of Paintings—By SARAH WHITFIELD



THE PALETTE KNIVES are out. Or so one might think from *The New Art History*,¹ a collection of essays equipped with what the editors call "a capacious and convenient title that sums up the impact of feminist, marxist, structuralist, psychoanalytic, and social-political ideas on a discipline notorious for its conservative taste in art and its orthodoxy in research". Given the history of art history, it is hardly surprising that in this country, at least, it should find itself increasingly involved in wars of ideology. For many years it was

dominated by two London institutions (the Courtauld Institute of Art, a teaching centre, under the direction of Anthony Blunt; and the Warburg Institute, a research centre headed by Fritz Saxl and later Ernst Gombrich) and was accessible only to a tiny minority of the population.

Art history was widely regarded as a subject best suited to post-graduate studies, and even some of the staff at the Courtauld who taught the BA Honours course there used to make no secret of their opinion that it was not a subject suited to a first degree. This hidebound attitude is in part responsible for the scant respect given to art history in schools, where, as one of the contributors to this collection complains, it is regarded as being the equivalent of needlework or cooking or other subjects which require a minimum of intellectual aptitude. "The new art historians", some of them products of these places of learning, are in revolt against what they recognise as the "formalist" and "value-free" style of teaching adopted by the established art

historical centres—the Courtauld most especially. Victor Burgin, a contributor who is an artist as well as a critic, has elsewhere likened their approach to the boring of a tunnel through history "along which wander the spirits of 'Great Artists', shackled like the ghost of Marley to their 'Great Works'."

The birth of the new art history is placed by the editors in the mid-1970s, when T. J. Clark called for an approach which took account of "the realities of the social world in which art is produced". That this was not an entirely new idea is a point made by several of the contributors, when they pay tribute to the generation of Frederick Antal, Arnold Hauser (both, incidentally, recommended at the Courtauld in the bad old days), and Francis Klingender—historians who had been giving serious attention to the social history of art since the 1940s. So what is new about the new art history?

Its language, mainly. "In discrediting the old art history, words like connoisseurship, quality, style and genius have become taboo, utterable by the new art historians only with scorn or mirth", write the editors. "The presence of the new art history is signalled by a different set of words—ideology, patriarchy, class, methodology." In practice this is not always as unpalatable as they make it sound, although one result of a not always perfect understanding of structuralism, a key mode, is that language teeters unhappily on the edge of jargon. (The critic Paul Overy makes the point that there are far fewer "signifiers and signifieds" in books written for the "mainstream" publishers than in articles written for specialist periodicals.)

This emphasis on the language of art history reflects the plurality of approaches currently being brought to bear on the subject, but how much this adds up to a genuinely new art history rather than just a methodologically more sophisticated one has still to be seen. As Professor Gombrich's old put-down has it, it is not very difficult to talk cleverly about art. Altering the language of criticism does not alter the quality of insights it offers. In fact the one thing most

¹ *The New Art History*. Edited by A. L. REES and F. BARZELLO. Camden Press, £5.95.

at risk, to judge from the general mood of this collection, is the work of art itself. So intent are some of the new art historians on getting away from the domination of the masterpiece that they risk throwing the baby out with the bath-water. Michael O'Pray is a notable exception, in that he detects the philistinism inherent in the stress laid on abstract theory, and sounds a note of caution: "Art history without aesthetics seems as blind as aesthetics without history would be empty."

MEANWHILE, THE WARBURG INSTITUTE is harbouring its own radical, Michael Baxandall, who has quietly streaked ahead of the new art history field. He too, is interested in method, but not, it must be stressed, as a tool of ideology. In his book *Patterns of Intention*,² he conducts experiments into methods of exploring the historical explanation of pictures, methods which although they might be considered by the new art historians to be the epitome of British empiricism, are both highly original and far-reaching. It is a formidable read: he has at his disposal not only the erudition compatible with his post as Professor of the History of Classical Tradition, but also a vivid intellectual imagination which is brought into play from the first chapter, where he maps out a scheme for the explanation of a historical object by examining the case of the Forth Bridge. This is followed by three chapters each devoted to a single work through which he tests a particular approach: Picasso's 1910 portrait of his dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, to examine a work against its "brief" and its market; Chardin's *Lady Taking Tea*, to explore the relations between a picture and specific scientific and philosophical ideas of its time; and Piero della Francesca's *Baptism of Christ*, to study the extent to which we are able to penetrate the culture of another period.

The chapter on Chardin brings out the best in Baxandall. The relation that a picture has to the culture of its time—a subject dear to the new art history—is also a subject which is very commonly fudged, as writers clutch at names (Nietzsche and Freud are the two favourites in 20th-century studies) with only a vague notion of the ideas that these names represent. Throwing out the reminder, "Active ideas do not float, they are brought to bear", Baxandall proceeds with a masterly analysis of the relation between the visual perception of Chardin and the Newtonian sense of colour on the one hand, and the Lockean model of perception on the other, which reveals in *Lady Taking Tea* "a story of perceptual experience masquerading lightly as a moment or two of sensation." What it also reveals is the sheer amount of knowledge that is required before such an attempt to link paintings and ideas can even be contemplated. Baxandall does not underestimate the difficulties; indeed, the sense of the inadequacy of any method or scheme which nags away at him explains the sprinkling of irascibility in each chapter. His diatribe against the misuse of the word "influence" should be made compulsory reading for all art historians, old or new.

There is no question that this is a book that anyone with an interest in the history of painting should read and study; but as they do they may find themselves wondering about the way in which historians trained in the classical tradition, like Baxandall, actually look at works of art, particularly modern works of art. While he shows himself to be completely at home in the chapter on Piero della Francesca, the unfamiliarity with modern art apparent in his chapter on Picasso's *Portrait of Kahnweiler*—a Cubist work—is disconcerting. In a rare moment of subjective judgment he writes about the portrait that "all that stippling on the periphery must have been rather uninteresting to do and is also rather uninteresting to see."

Now, this might seem a rather uninteresting aside—but it is ominously revealing. To begin with, the stippling covers more than just the periphery, which makes sense as it is an essential device in establishing the flatness of the picture plane: it forces the eye to move across the canvas, impeding the instinct to delve beyond the surface. In this way, it reinforces the picture's status as an object rather than as a representation—a vital piece of Cubist lore. Baxandall makes it sound not just boring but unnecessary, which is severely to misunderstand one "intention" at least. (Can he be serious about finding the velvet texture of Picasso's stippling "boring"?) Then he is disconcerted to find that the still-life composition in the bottom left-hand corner of the picture could be mistaken for one of the Spanish hill towns visited by Picasso that summer, apparently oblivious to the fact that such instances of planted ambiguity are ubiquitous not just in Cubism but in 20th-century art as a whole. Has he never wondered, for example, why the Surrealists, with their cult of ambiguity, should have wanted to claim Picasso for one of their own?

Baxandall's quirky way of looking at a painting is amply demonstrated by what must be one of the most eccentric illustrations ever to find its way into a book on art. A reproduction of Picasso's portrait of his previous dealer, Ambroise Vollard, also a Cubist work of 1910, has been rephotographed with blurred focus in order to suggest to the reader that he is looking at the picture through half-closed eyes. Seen like this, claims the author, "the phenomenal Vollard jumps out like a photograph". The inference here seems to be that the more like a photograph a Cubist portrait is, the more successful it must be. This hare-brained experiment is useful only as a measure of how acutely uncomfortable Baxandall is with paintings which have broken with the Renaissance sense of visual truth. As it happens, the extraordinary likeness Picasso achieved in that portrait was remarked upon by the sitter himself, who did not seem to object that it patently shows him fast asleep, a recurring problem for Vollard, or rather for the artists who painted him. (Cézanne, for example, became incensed when Vollard nodded off while posing for him, causing the collapse of his elaborately constructed platform.)

Although this chapter prepares the reader for the author's suggestion that a 15th-century painting can appear less "remote" from us in some ways than Picasso's *Portrait of Kahnweiler*, this still comes across as a very disturbing idea—disturbing because it forces us to face the question of whether

² *Patterns of Intention*. By MICHAEL BAXANDALL. Yale University Press. £12.50, \$18.95.

20th-century painting is inherently more “difficult” than painting of other periods.

ALISTAIR SMITH, one of the contributors to *Looking Into Paintings*,³ a guide to painting produced by the Open University as part of its Continuing Education programme, gets to grips with at least one reason why his readers might find modern art particularly difficult, by turning to the history of the links between art and science. He points out that in Raphael’s time, for example, art and science were unified to a point that is inconceivable now, and since all scientific experiment then depended on the eye as its only instrument “there was no way in which scientific fact was invisible”. Thus the level of scientific observation in a Raphael portrait—observation of the anatomy of the face and of the fall of light on it—was on a par with current scientific thinking and would have been recognised as such by his audience.

Increasingly and irrevocably, art and science have become separated from each other to the point where science has completely undermined visual truth in the Renaissance sense. Since the artist can no longer base his perception on scientific fact, he has to base it on what Alistair Smith calls “his personal world-view”, and it is this which determines his style. Once the artist’s perception goes beyond what the spectator is able to see with his eye alone, his art becomes less accessible. This explanation helps to account for the way in which many people, of whom Baxandall is only one, struggle to arrive at a “correct” reading of a Cubist painting—to “read” it as they would “read” a painting by Piero della Francesca.

Looking into Paintings adopts the no-nonsense approach of dividing art into chapters entitled Narrative Paintings, Portraits, Landscape, and Still-life, but the fact that it is part of a teaching programme and adopts the tone of a strict but benevolent tutor should not put readers off—it is extremely readable. The story Alistair Smith tells of the commissioning and subsequent burning of Graham Sutherland’s portrait of Winston Churchill, which turns out to be more a case history for a social anthropologist than for an art historian, is one of the more gripping tales of our time.

WHILE *Looking into Paintings* is a book which deserves a much wider audience than its limp, uninspiring cover will probably attract, Edwin Mullins’s attempt to woo the feminist wing of the art-loving public deserves a speedy oblivion. *The Painted Witch: female body/male art*⁴ begins with the conversion to Feminism which Mullins undergoes the day he

reads *The Female Eunuch* by Germaine Greer and learns that “women have very little idea how much men hate them”. This thought alone is enough to send him scurrying off to the National Gallery with the nasty suspicion that he may have passed a great deal of his life as “the unknowing victim of male cultural hypnosis”. The National Gallery guidebook causes him to wince: “It displayed a beautiful woman with bare breasts on the cover. A Tiepolo”, and he dutifully asks himself the question, “Exploitation?” (The reader might want to ask the same question about the bare-breasted nude emblazoned on the cover of his book.) Reeling past Rubens’s *The Rape of the Sabine Women* (“the most bestially insensitive picture in the National Gallery”), he emerges into Trafalgar Square a changed man, vowing to redress the wrongs meted out to women over the centuries, etc. etc.

Although he is right in thinking that Feminism should not be an issue confined to women, one does wonder just what sort of favour he thinks he is doing the feminist cause with this self-indulgent and, worse, misleading stuff. Misleading because of the way he selects paintings to bolster up his arguments while ignoring those which might discredit them. Charging the Belgian Surrealist painter, René Magritte, with bringing the “wheel of misogyny full circle” with his painting *The Rape* (an image where a woman’s torso is substituted for her face), he chooses to overlook a very well-known painting by that artist, *Les Jours gigantesques*, which unequivocally is about the act of rape and is unequivocally seen from the terrorised viewpoint of the woman. Now, it only remains to be seen whether Mullins will rally to the defence of the male cause and reveal the iniquities perpetrated by Praxiteles, Donatello, Michelangelo and Caravaggio, to name but a few of the shameless exploiters of the male body.

TO JUDGE FROM the list of words proscribed by *The New Art History* (“connoisseurship, quality, style and genius”), Richard Dormont might find himself excluded from their number with his biography of the Victorian sculptor, Alfred Gilbert,⁵ written as it is in a finely chiselled narrative style very much in keeping with the delicately crafted, ingeniously wrought, highly detailed work of its subject. The mass of personal papers left by Gilbert and run to earth by Dormont allows not only a minute excavation of the artist’s life but also a fresh look at the relations between the Victorian Establishment and the artists it employed. The research looks impeccable, and the account given of this troubled life is full of understanding and commendably impartial.

The only flaw is its weakness for the smart throwaway remark. Writing about Gilbert at the peak of his career, the 1890s, Dormont says: ‘He might be compared at this date to a Fabergé, rather than, as he might have become, a Bernini.’ Gilbert a Bernini? It isn’t even a serious question and Dormont knows it. As it happens, he goes to great lengths not to make impossible claims for his subject. He sees very clearly how Gilbert’s relentless pursuit of fame and fortune within the English Establishment, which all too soon led to his bankruptcy and exile, was allowed to take precedence over

³ *Looking into Paintings*. By NORBERT LYNTON, ALISTAIR SMITH, NORBERT CUMMING and DIANÉ COLLINSON. Faber and Faber/Channel 4 Television, £9.95.

⁴ *The Painted Witch: female body/male art*. By EDWIN MULLINS. Secker & Warburg, £15.00.

⁵ *Alfred Gilbert*. By RICHARD DORMONT. Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, \$35.00, £21.00; paper \$14.95, £9.95.

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the pursuit of his art: this choice, as Gilbert realised too late, was fatally detrimental to his development as an artist.

Gilbert's work seems to have sprung into the world already covered with the patina of age, so it is always something of a shock to remember how close a contemporary he was of the father of modern sculpture, Auguste Rodin. But Gilbert was no stranger to Rodin's world. In the mid-1870s he studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he benefited from the technical training—superior by far, Dormont tells us, to that offered at the Royal Academy. He was familiar with modern French sculptors, Carpeaux, Dalou (with whose work his own early figures are usefully compared), and of course, Rodin, although his attitude to this master was apparently only lukewarm. Rodin, for his part, thought well of Gilbert, and on being informed that the English placed him on a par with Benvenuto Cellini, is said to have replied, “*Oh, bien au-delà, bien au-delà*”. Nowadays Gilbert's monumental sculptures tend to be overshadowed by his smaller, highly ornamental works, so it is salutary to learn how impressed Rodin was by the model he saw for the Jubilee Memorial to Queen Victoria, particularly as Gilbert might appear to some as the one sculptor who exemplifies everything that Rodin was in revolt against.

Gilbert did not dream of questioning the society he worked for, far from it; his close associations with the Royal Family gave him inordinate pleasure. Writing gleefully from Sandringham, where he had been summoned to discuss plans for a memorial to the recently deceased Duke of Clarence, he

was able to tell his mother, “Here in this house of mourning, the house of our future King and Queen, and his successors, am I humble Artist son of Artists honoured, trusted, consulted.”

Rodin, a thoroughgoing republican, had a far more realistic grasp of the social upheaval going on around him, and his sculpture, especially his sculpture for the public domain, reflects strong democratic ideals. In concentrating on just one work by Rodin, *The Thinker*, Albert Elsen is able to tackle the whole question of how these ideals brought about dramatic changes in the role of the public monument.⁶ At the turn of the century, statues were still considered “guardians of public decorum and patriotism, as well as the last defence of ‘true’ beauty that painting had abandoned with Impressionism.” He also makes the nice point that critics wrote about them as though they were actors or living people, anything indeed but sculpture. Gilbert's statues, by and large, conformed to these lofty ideals although his *Shaftesbury Memorial* was seen at this time as dangerously out of line, with its nude figure of Eros shooting arrows into the notorious streets of Piccadilly. As a Mrs Whitehouse of the period pointed out, the site itself was an insult to a man who had been a tireless campaigner against the theatres.

The way in which Rodin changed the face of public sculpture was to strip away its pedestal. One only has to compare the *Shaftesbury Memorial* with *The Thinker* to grasp the significance of his action. Eros perches, a mere gilded detail, on top of an enormous and elaborately worked base: the sculpture is almost all pedestal. *The Thinker*, however, sits squarely on a completely simple base consisting of a foundation of black stone, three steps, and a cube of white stone. The connotations of power, authority and nationalism which, as Elsen points out, are implicit in the pedestal when it is in an integral part of the monument are thus swept away at a stroke.

This gesture of taking statues off their pedestals has now become a commonplace, not just for avant-garde works but for sculpture of all kinds. Professor Elsen, as an American, is well placed for observing some of the more bizarre substitutions for the raised heroes of the past, citing as a prime example the gigantic figures in the form of balloons which dominate Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. It is hardly surprising that this radical revision of the status of public monuments should have made it difficult for Rodin to persuade the French State to make suitable sites available for his sculptures, and part of Elsen's story is about *The Thinker's* search for a permanent home. (In this respect, Gilbert was the more fortunate of the two—on the whole his works stayed where they were put.) In 1906, Rodin was granted his wish to have his sculpture installed immediately in front of the Pantheon—a prime site which, as Elsen says, must have seemed a triumph to the artist and his supporters—but in 1922, five years after his death, the State had its revenge, and it was quietly removed on the order of the Ministry of Public Instruction and placed in the Musée Rodin.

IMPORTANT!

To avoid waste we have decided to revise our mailing list for indexes. The present list is being cancelled, and a new up-to-date list is being compiled.

If you wish to receive the index in future, please be sure to return the coupon (or a similar letter if you prefer not to cut your copy).

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⁶ *Rodin's Thinker and the Dilemmas of Modern Public Sculpture*. By ALBERT E. ELSÉN. Yale University Press, \$30.00, £22.00; paper \$12.50, £8.95.

Both authors report the various acts of vandalism suffered by the sculptures of Rodin and Gilbert (the most disgraceful being Queen Mary's gilding of Gilbert's superb epergne, a tablepiece made of silver, bronze, ivory and crystal, which all but ruined the carefully contrived effects of contrasting metals), but from what Sarah Walden writes, it seems to be the restorers who commit the really irreversible acts of vandalism. *The Ravished Image*⁷ is a catalogue of such disasters, ranging from the 17th-century Frenchman who suggested that the best treatment for dirty paintings was "to take warm urine, or simply piss on the painting" to the more sophisticated, some would say more deadly, steps taken by our own National Gallery in recent years.

The scars left by the 1962 controversy over their cleaning of *Bacchus and Ariadne* have left their mark on more than Titian's canvas. The anger expressed by Ernst Gombrich at the time over the view taken by Helmut Ruhemann, a consultant restorer to the Gallery, during a critical period in the picture-cleaning controversy, that Titian's oil glazes were not soluble, not at risk, is still simmering away in his Foreword to this book. And it may even have been that particularly bitter confrontation which led Sarah Walden, herself a restorer, to write it: her spirited account of the whole episode is strongly anti-Ruhemann. But more insidious damage results from the ways in which contemporary prejudices influence the restorer's work without his even being aware of it. The prejudices she identifies as affecting the restorers of today are "broadly those of advertising: impact, rawness and readability", hidden persuaders which

beckon paintings "imperceptibly a few years nearer to our own ideals", closer to the clean precision of a Mondrian square.

Those Mondrian squares have themselves fallen victims to the desire to keep modern painting spanking new through the brash application of fresh coats of paint over the delicate brushwork of the original surface. Modern paintings suffer just as much as the old. Walden writes eloquently of the terrible damage inflicted on the Cubist paintings of Picasso and Braque:

"Their surfaces are now often sodden and monotonous looking: the spikey provocative interplay of texture—part of the very essence of cubism—has gone. The contrasts between velvety black recessions, gravelly advancing lights or sudden patches of powdery blue have gone too, deadened by a combination of wax impregnation from behind, and varnishing in front."

One lesson *The Ravished Image* can teach everyone who looks at paintings is how pathetically trusting we are when we walk round museums and art galleries. Labels may identify the artist, the title of his work and its date, but they do not identify the damage. Curators and dealers are not keen to alert the public to the fact that whole areas of a work have been repainted, or that cleaning has removed layers of precious glazes, or that the canvas has been relined and the impasto flattened in the process, or that unstable pigments have completely altered the balance of the original colours, or that the surface is now covered with a synthetic resin. . . . The onus is well and truly on the spectator to find these things out for himself. In the light of this, one has to ask the editors of *The New Art History* if connoisseurship really is such a dirty word after all.

⁷ *The Ravished Image*. By SARAH WALDEN. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £12.95.

The Wife Speaks

Now that I'm dead, he writes
All day in his study downstairs
About me and my pony, my dress,
My brown hair, and those sweet old airs
That I played him when we first met.
He shares all our private affairs.

He peers through a mist at my youth,
He turns at my distant call,
I must ride for him by the sea,
I must visit his house at nightfall.
How he loves me as ghost, how he thrills
To my shade where it fades from the wall.

That shrivelled and shivering man
With his red-rimmed eyes and white hair
Who built us this cold dark house,
Loves me if I'll wander out there.
But he won't ask me in, he dislikes
My warm breath near the poems we share.

Ruth Silcock

Books Encountered

A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Girl. Edited by JOHN QUINN. Methuen, £8.95.

Charming, unpretentious reminiscences, revised from RTE radio interviews with Maeve Binchy, Clare Boylan, Polly Devlin, Jennifer Johnston, Molly Keane, Mary Lavin, Joan Lingard, Dervla Murphy, and Edna O'Brien, plus excerpts. The Church, the Troubles, the family, and release through words.

Graham Greene. By A. A. DeVITIS. Twayne Publishers/Macmillan, £16.95.

Revised edition of Professor De Vitis's 1964 study, since which Greene has published nearly a score of new works, and critics have written almost as many substantial analyses, enumerated in a bibliography with comments, and partly surveyed in a useful short chapter on "Literary Opinions". DeVitis's own is high.

Empiricism, Explanation and Rationality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of the Social Sciences. By LEN DOYAL and ROGER HARRIS. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £20.

Didactic in the best sense, and designed for intelligent but unlearned undergraduates, this explores empiricism, confronting Popper and Kuhn; distinguishes between the methodologies of the natural and the social sciences; and refutes relativism. Chapter bibliographies flesh out and update the argument.

Setting the Mould: The United States and Britain 1945-1950. By ROBIN EDMONDS. Clarendon Press, Oxford, £25.

Scholarly recap. by a former British diplomatist, based on newly opened US and UK archives, of the so-called (by the UK) "special relationship"—rhetoric on which increased as its content declined. Tragic paradox: the British spurned European integration for fear of losing the USA, which was urging them into it. *Verb. sap.* 1987.

The Master Eccentric: The Journals of Rayner Heppenstall 1969-1982. Edited by JONATHAN GOODMAN. Allison & Busby, £14.95.

Not a match for that title, borrowed from C. P. Snow, but a genial Mr Growser mixing public and private concerns, fascinated by crime, tempted by suicide, much attached to France, sometimes called the first *nouveau romancier*, and a gadfly on the British literary scene. The editing's too unbiographical.

The New Enlightenment: The Rebirth of Liberalism. By DAVID GRAHAM and PETER CLARKE. Macmillan, £6.95.

Published with Channel Four Television, the book of the six-part series bearing the same name. Graham the producer and Clarke the economist argue rather breathlessly the merits of the free market, but are stronger on criticism of welfare and aid dependency than on their low-tax utopia.

Who Owns London? By SHIRLEY GREEN. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £10.95.

Fascinating, meticulously researched, pedestrianly written part-answer to its title's question, surveying in turn the Crown Estate, the Church Commissioners, the aristocracy, the City, the Charities, the property companies, the local authorities, the Government, the institutions, etc. Only lack: a pull-out map.

Local Government and Urban Politics. By WILLIAM HAMPTON. Longman, £7.95.

Shrewd, even-handed analysis of the crisis caused by shrunken industry in old big cities, growth in smaller towns, and increased ideology, Left and Right, making a once-dull subject vital. Professor Hampton chides the Right for lack of planning, the Left for blaming everything on the Right, and both for myopia.

Cahiers du Cinéma. Volume 2. Edited by JIM HILLIER. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £18.95.

Thirty-nine pieces from more than 100 issues (January 1960

to December 1968), covering "New Wave, New Cinema, Re-evaluating Hollywood". Authors include Rohmer, Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol, Rivette, and Barthes, in discussion or interview, plus regular *Cahiers* critics, like Walter Mitty inscrutable to the last.

The Market for Glory: Fleet Street Ownership in the 20th Century. By SIMON JENKINS. Faber, £9.95.

Authoritative insider's account of Fleet Street and Wapping takeovers, including memories of old Spanish customs, thumbnail sketches of key figures, a defence of private ownership despite its drawbacks, and admission that readers remain conservative, but no real answer to why proprietors accept the hassle.

The End of the Street. By LINDA MELVERN. Methuen, £9.95.

Detailed history of News International's move to Wapping and the 20th century, by a former member of the *Sunday Times* "Insight" group. Although less analytical than Simon Jenkins (above), it describes some *new* Spanish customs (not the latest violence), and is frank about both sides.

The Royal Court Theatre 1965-1972. By PHILIP ROBERTS. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £18.95.

Scholarly but expansive and trudging chronicle of the Sloane Square playhouse during William Gaskill's years as its Artistic Director. Since its climax is Howard Brenton's *Magnificence*, some may feel George Devine's tenure as Gaskill's predecessor more rewarding for study.

The Complete Alice & The Hunting of the Snark. By LEWIS CARROLL. Illustrated by RALPH STEADMAN. Cape, £15.

At last—the gonzo Dodgson? In these nightmare pictures, filled with birdcage-like reeds, hair, and railings, the iconography's that of newspaper cartoons, sci-fi, and *The Yellow Submarine*. Alice becomes a podgy proletarian androgyne; only the White Rabbit has much charm. I prefer Tenniel or Peake.

Beatrix Potter: Artist, Storyteller and Countrywoman. By JUDY TAYLOR. Warne, £12.95.

Reworking of the well-known story by a children's books editor with access to the publisher's files, revealing fraud and near-bankruptcy as well as many new Beatrix Potter letters. The illustrations are delightful, the prose less so, but the price moderate. A fresh letter collection is on the way.

Wrestling with a Pencil: The Life of a Freelance Artist. By NORMAN THELWELL. Methuen, £12.50.

Crisp, benign, well-illustrated autobiography by the creator of fierce imps on pot-bellied ponies, frenzied mutts on doomed but accurately drawn yachts, and comic industrial catastrophes clearly the work of a country-lover. His serious sketches are lively: his paintings have Rowland Hilder charm but seem static.

Scenes from Institutional Life and Other Writings. By JOHN VAIZEY. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £12.95.

Slight but memorable appendages embellish the late Lord Vaizey's poignant account of childhood in hospital, which still reads freshly after nearly 30 years, and will surely last. Hugh Thomas, Frank Field, and T. E. B. Howarth add tributes to a talented, formidable, witty, and thoughtful man.

Virginia Woolf and the Real World. By ALEX ZWERDLING. University of California Press, \$24.95, £21.25.

A relief from the Bloomsbury fan club: penetrating, learned, wide-ranging appreciation of Virginia Woolf in her social and political context, documenting what muscle and thought there was in her allegedly gossamer work—although *A Room of One's Own* has always proved how much more she was made of.

R.M.

THEOLOGY

The Long Life of Metaphor

An Approach to "the Shoah"—By GEORGE STEINER



IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, the question as to whether there is a mode of human language in which to speak adequately of God is a classical and perennial motif. It constitutes the linguistic-philosophical sphere of hermeneutic theology. Prayer to God does not present a problem; discourse about God, a very nearly insoluble one. It is, precisely, the God-concept which seems to transcend the capacities of language either to define or to analogise truthfully the object of conceptualisation and expression. The Wittgensteinian precept that the limits of our language are those of our world simply restates the dilemma. Language cannot go beyond the constraints of the human intellect and imagination. By definition, God lies outside such constraints.

In Judaism, this problem of linguistic epistemology, or hermeneutic theology, has not been prominent. Indeed, the very notion of "theology", in the post-Pauline, post-Johannine, and post-Augustinian sense, has no real counterpart in Jewish religious feeling. The most authentic and lasting strength in Jewish sensibility is not a reflection or metaphysical discourse on the nature and attributes of God, but rather a "living in His presence". From Abraham onward, there has been a covenant of dialogue between the believing Jew and God. In this dialogue, the problem of language does not really obtrude. As, perhaps, in no other faith, the God of Abraham and Moses, and those whom He has chosen to speak to, individually and as a community, share the same language. We can almost define the language-world of Judaism in relation to God as one of idiomatic affinity.

One of the consequences of the Shoah (the Holocaust) is to have transported (violently, irreparably) into Judaism, both religious and secular, the hermeneutic dilemma. The problem as to whether there is a human form of language adequate to the conceptualisation and understanding of Auschwitz, as to whether the limits of language do not fall short of the limits of the Shoah-experience, is now ineradicably installed in Jewish existence.

This is true, first, on the theological level as such: in what conceivable language can a Jew speak to God after Auschwitz, in what conceivable language can he speak about God?

The challenge is deeper, more corrosive than that in Christian hermeneutics. In post-Shoah Judaism, the question of the language of prayer—how can it be anything but cynical, accusatory or despairing?—is radically posed. I will come back to it via a text by Paul Celan which, alone I believe, is as profound and encompassing as is the problem itself. As to speech about God: what forms can it take, what plausibility can it enlist, after the death-camps?

But the possible absence of any mode of human expression relevant to the Shoah-experience has consequences which extend beyond the ritual and the religious domain. Even the most secular Jew is the explicit creature of his past, of Jewish history. Even the Jewish atheist or most deliberate assimilationist orients his identity in reference to the historical destiny of the Jewish people and the enigma of their survival. What categories of intelligibility, what grammar of reason, indeed what vocabulary in the most concrete sense, can incorporate, can articulate, can give interpretation to, the abyss of 1938-45? But if there can be no such intelligible and significant incorporation, what will befall that lived sense of an unbroken past, that ontological historicity, which has, until now, been the immediate context of Jewish self-recognition, both personally and communally? For a Jew to be silent about any determining part of his own history is self-mutilation.

There are no ready answers to this absolutely crucial dilemma. It is by no means clear that there can be, or that there ought to be, any form, style, code of articulate, intelligible expression somehow adequate to the facts of the Shoah. Let us consider this point closely, bearing in mind both the existential (the *can*) and the morally prescriptive (the *ought*) elements of the situation.

IT MAY BE THAT the Auschwitz-universe, for it was that, precisely marks that realm of potential—now realised—human bestiality, or, rather, abandonment of the human and regression to bestiality, which both precedes language, as it does in the animal, and comes after language as it does in death. Auschwitz would signify on a collective, historical scale the *death of man* as a rational, "forward-dreaming" speech-organism (the *zoon phonanta* of Greek philosophy). The languages we are now speaking on this polluted and suicidal planet are "post-human". They are serving creatures less than man. They are loud with emptiness, a volume made

the more evident and barbaric by electronic media. Where the language is still humane, in the root sense of that word, it is being spoken by survivors, remembrancers and ghosts. Its haunted music is that of the embers which continue to crackle in the cooling ash of a dead fire. Eloquence after Auschwitz would be a kind of obscenity (this is the meaning of T. W. Adorno's so often misunderstood call for "no poetry after Auschwitz").

But I ask further: since it is not eloquence which is at issue, what kind of rationality, what kind of ordered logic of the human social and psychological circumstance, what processes of rational analysis and causal explanation, are available to language after the cancer of reason, the travesty of all meaningfulness, enacted in the Shoah? It is doubts of this order which have generated my own (provisional) feeling that silence is the only, though in its way suicidal, option; that to try to speak or write intelligibly, interpretatively, about Auschwitz is to misconceive totally the nature of that event and to misconstrue totally the necessary constraints of humanity within language.

What is more: it may be that after the Shoah, those metaphors, those projections and sublimations, which made it possible for human words and human syntax to speak about God are no longer available to us. (It could, quite precisely, be this non-availability which now sickens, which now condemns to erosion or quarrelsome gossip the discourse-worlds, the speech-acts, of Christianity and of Christian theologies.) It may be that after the gassing, starvation, live burial, slow torture, burning of millions of men, women and children in the heartlands of so-called civilisation, we no longer have cause or need to speak to or about a God whose overwhelming attribute became that of absence, of nothingness. Words fail *us*, as we have failed *them*. And it is this dialectic of reciprocal failing—*O Wort, du Wort das mir Fehlt!* is Moses's despairing cry at the unfinished close of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*—which would come nearest to justifying the concept of "the death of God" or (as I prefer to think of it) of "the exit of God" from language, which is to say, from the bounds of human experience.

POSSIBLY THE ONLY LANGUAGE in which anything intelligible, anything responsible, about the Shoah can be attempted is German.

It is in German at the very source of its modern genius and linguistic conventions, i.e. in Luther's pamphlets of the early 1540s, that the elimination, the *Ausrottung* of the Jew from Europe, that the burning alive of the Jew, is clearly enunciated. It is in the seminal call to German nationhood, in Fichte's *Address to the German Nation*, that Jew-hatred is given the sanction of a major philosophy. It is in German that Heine, as early as 1820, voices the plain warning that where certain books are being burned, human beings will be. It is Nietzsche who, with almost somnambular clarity, identifies murderous anti-Semitism as being the defining dynamism of the German spirit. It is Franz Kafka's parables, notably *The Metamorphosis* and *In a Penal Colony*, which exactly prevision the vocabulary, the technocracy, the politics and psychology of the subhuman, as these are fulfilled in the

concentration-camp state. It is Karl Kraus who concretely dates "the last days of humanity", who gives the apocalypse of the inhuman its calendar. The literally unspeakable words which are used to plan, to prescribe, to record, to justify, the Shoah, the words which entail and set down the burning alive of children in front of their parents' eyes, the slow drowning of old men and women in excrement, the eradication of millions in a verbose bureaucracy of murder, are German words. They are words to which the hallucinatory fantastications, the death-*Kitsch* of Nazi oratory, gave a force, a consequence which few other words have possessed in human history.

It may be, therefore, that if there is to be a rehumanisation of language after the Shoah, a restoration to language of its lost capacities to speak to and about God, to speak to and about man in any answerable (*verantwortlich*) sense, such reparation and restoration can come only from within the death-idiom itself. It is in German that we find the only poet—dare I say the only writer—on a level (and I use that eroded phrase with extreme, literal intent) with Auschwitz.

IT WOULD FOLLOW that the attitudes towards the Shoah in the earlier years of the State of Israel and of the new Israeli literature represent a counterpart to the destined singularity of German.

For quite a long time, Israeli sensibility sought to look away from the European and East European catastrophe. Israeli poets and novelists wrote of other themes. This has changed, I know. But even today, the relations between modern Hebrew and the realities of Auschwitz are problematic (as is, within Israel, the vestigial, spectral presence of Yiddish). How could the rebirth of Israel, how could the modulation of Hebrew into a future tense—one, precisely, lacking in the intemporal presentness of Biblical Hebrew—incorporate the Shoah without risking self-destruction, without relinquishing the life-giving grammar of hope? Even as there is an urgent sense in which Auschwitz is the problem not of the Jew but of the Christian, in which it is now central to the terminal sickness both of Enlightenment rationalism and Christian belief, so there is an urgent sense in which the language-dilemma brought on by the Shoah is, above all, the problem of German and the non-problem of Hebrew. I do not really believe this to be the case, but register the logic and force of the proposition.

THE QUESTIONS I have posed, and the way in which I have posed them, postulate the uniqueness of the Shoah. They imply that the massacre of European and East-European Jewry under National Socialism is an event unlike any other in the long history of massacres and mass-extirpation. The Shoah is seen to be what modern physics calls a "singularity", a phenomenon and event outside the rules or patterns of the general system of reality. Is this so? I find the question deeply unsettling, even repellent. But it must be considered.

Quantitatively—and this is, by itself, something of an

obscene criterion—there have been worse killings. Responsible historians put at ten or twelve million the number of human beings done to death by the Stalinist régime during the crisis of the *Kulaks* and the subsequent purges and deportations. We have, over these past two decades, witnessed massacres in Indonesia and in Africa which run into the hundred thousands, perhaps millions. The insane blood-lust which erupted in Cambodia under Pol Pot massacred an estimated two or two-and-a-half million men, women and children in a much shorter time than that of the Shoah. With the very brief, inherently fragile exception of that armistice with history which benefited the middle and upper classes in Western Europe during the century from 1815 to 1914, massacre, torture, deportation, the persecution of minorities, the exploitation of race-hatreds have been the customary fabric of history. Men are murderous and murdering primates. See the *Book of Joshua*.

Is there a qualitative uniqueness in the Shoah? The argument that there is a bestial innovation in the Nazi decision to kill all Jews purely and simply on ethnic-racial grounds does not hold. Ask the Armenians, the Gypsies, the members—men, women, children—of those diverse African tribes methodically hounded to death in Uganda or Burundi. In ancient history, whole peoples, cultures, languages were eradicated by deliberate political acts of homicide, vengeance, or enslavement. A number of Jewish thinkers and historians have argued that the Shoah differs from any other massacre in its application of a specifically-designed bureaucracy and technology. I do not find this argument persuasive. In their own military-political terms, the mass-extinctions carried out by the Vandals, by the Huns, by Islamic conquerors of Byzantium, represent appalling feats of purposed and organised bestiality. Arrows and fire kill no less surely than gas ovens. *If* there are qualitative differences between the Shoah and the innumerable examples of mass-murder which punctuate history both before and since, they must lie very deep: in that symbolic and metaphysical-theological realm which I want to point towards.

But whatever the “objective” case, and here “objectivity” is near to being inconceivable, the presumed uniqueness of the Shoah has become vital to Judaism now. In numerous, complex ways it underlies and underwrites certain essential aspects of the re-creation of nationhood in Israel, a re-creation whose uniqueness, whose transcendence of normal probability even in secular perceptions, subtly counterbalances that of the world of Auschwitz, of Bergen-Belsen. Climaxing—but also overshadowing—all previous persecutions in the history of Jewish exclusion and suffering, the

Shoah has given to that history a particularity of darkness, a seeming logic in which the sole categorical imperative is that of survival.¹

The Shoah, the remembrance of Auschwitz, the haunting apprehension that, somewhere, somehow, the massacres could begin anew, is today the cement of Jewish identity. It is the one and only bond which unites the Orthodox Jew and the atheist, the practising Jew and the total secularist, the people of Israel and the Diaspora, the Zionist and the anti-Zionist, the extreme conservative Jew (so prominent in the United States today) and the Jewish Trotskyite or Communist. Above all else, to be a Jew in the second half of this century is to be a survivor, and one who knows that his survival can again be put in question.

THIS BOND IS AT ONCE inevitable and psychologically ambiguous. It serves to mask the profound differences within current Judaism. Israel has too often invoked the Shoah as an apologia, as a justification for the more extreme gestures of its policies, both inside its borders and beyond them. The horror of the Shoah and of its recall, in books, in pictures, in the media, has provided the non-practising, the largely-assimilated Jew in the West, notably in the United States, with a subtly self-flattering, self-dramatising aura of tragic “belonging”. A disturbingly commercialised pathos of horror has arisen around certain survivors and their all-too-eloquent and sometimes even theatrical witness. In other instances, the remembrance of the Shoah and the agonising question of the absence or inadequacy of Jewish resistance have induced self-contempt and a compensating fascination with violence. We are, in certain respects, a traumatised, a crazed people. How could we not be? Especially where it is that trauma which keeps us from final dispersal.

UNAVOIDABLY, the idiom of singularity, the assumption that the Shoah must be thought about and studied, if at all, as extraterritorial to normal human history, has become intermixed with the usual modes of historical, sociological, economic discourse. The instruments and disciplines of rational inquiry which apply, say, even to the apocalyptic massacres, starvation, manhunts and lies of the decades of the Gulag, or which are currently being brought to bear on the horror of recent Cambodian history, are felt to be both relevant and, in the final analysis, irrelevant to the understanding of the Shoah. To *normalise* that understanding would, very precisely, signify an abandonment of the appalling yet also ennobling, justifying mystery of Jewish identity. My own reflections on and questions about Auschwitz, in fiction and non-fiction, my attempts to say something on the nature of human language after the Shoah (I now try to avoid that ritual, elevated, and therefore radically inappropriate Greek word, “Holocaust”), directly reflect this intermingling of different, perhaps irreconcilable levels of analysis and of method.

One major fact does seem clear. So far, the empirical, the positivist (*wissenschaftlich*) techniques and methodologies

¹ How fascinating, how disconcerting would be a history of modern Judaism with no reference to the Shoah: a history of the immense successes of Jews in the sciences, in Marxism, in psychoanalysis, in the modern philosophies of language from Mauthner and Wittgenstein to Chomsky and Saul Kripke; which would recount the success-story of Jews in America; which would chronicle the often dominant role of Jews and Jewish talent in 20th-century finance, in the mass media, in humour, and in certain areas of literature. But there is no such book; and we could not bear it if there was.

have failed to explain not only the sources of the Shoah in high European civilisation; they have also failed to explain certain crucial elements in Nazi policy and in the aftermath of that policy.

I would not deny for a moment the value of economic-sociological investigations of European Jew-hatred from the beginnings of modern mercantilism and market-competition to the present. I fully recognise the endeavours of political theorists and political historians to analyse, to quantify the class-conflicts, the demographic shifts, the voting-patterns which underlay the Dreyfus Affair and the rise of Nazism. Psychologists of the so-called "totalitarian personality", of race-relations under economic stress, have made stimulating suggestions. By simple virtue of their publication of the documentary records of the death-camps, of the massacres at large, of Jewish resistance, the historians of the Shoah have performed an absolutely essential act of truthful remembrance, of resurrection. Theirs has been the *kaddish* against lies, and that greatest lie which is forgetting. Pragmatical, systematic studies of the Shoah are vital.

To my mind they have not, however, illuminated the deeper-lying roots of the inhuman. They have, quite markedly, failed to explain—except on the rather trivial level of Hitler's private pathology—the Nazi decision to press on with "the Final Solution" when even a brief suspension of the death-transport, round-ups, and extermination industry would have freed desperately-needed resources for the defence and survival of the *Reich*. Nor do "rationalistic" and immanently-grounded explanations explain the continuation of virulent Jew-hatred in countries, in societies where there are virtually *no Jews left* (as in Poland, in Austria, in the Ukraine). The seeds of Auschwitz—the Nazi sense of victory over the Jews as outweighing the ruin of Germany; Jew-hatred where only phantoms are left. These are the questions which demand an attempt at an answer. And it is this attempt which leads me to test a different order or framework of thought and speech.

"REGARDLESS OF WHAT ANYONE may personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western culture for almost twenty centuries" (Jaroslav Pelikan). At their peril, the Jews in the long ghetto of their waiting ignored this fact. As did those Jews who after the later 18th century played so forceful a role in the history of the European Enlightenment and of the secularisation (probably superficial) of our modern consciousness. Nor did many Jews read and ponder that early and perhaps most inspired of all documents in the history of Jewish self-hatred, Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*, 9-12. It is in that fantastically charged, opaque, at moments schizophrenic text, and in the immense volume of development and interpretation to which it has given rise, that we find the dark font of the interminable tragedy of Jewish-Christian coexistence or, rather, of Christianity's destined, logical attempt to terminate that coexistence.

Embryonic or fully spelt out, several scenarios spring from

the Pauline source. Christ was the long-awaited Messiah, the Davidic liberator and saviour so accurately prefigured in the Psalms and in Isaiah's vision of the suffering servant and representative of God. It is this Messiah, foretold in their own Torah, prayers, and prophecy, whom the Jewish people handed over to abominable torment and death. In so doing, Judaism eradicated from within itself not only the act of divine election, the "chosenness" by and for God's unique purpose; it tore up from within its own flesh and spirit *the very right to hope*. Israel passed into the limbo of theological sterility and despair (and certain cardinal traditions in Christian doctrine define precisely such despair as the unforgivable sin).

A second scenario is no less ominous. By refusing to recognise Jesus of Nazareth as the foretold Messiah, the Jews have postponed the day of man's salvation, the apocalyptic enfranchisement of suffering humanity and the eternal justice and peace which are to attend the Second Coming. Israel's refusal of Christ has, literally, condemned mankind to the treadmill of history. The Jews therefore hold the *Ecclesia* in particular, and humanity in general, hostage. There can be no liberation, no salvation from the agonies, bloodshed and injustice of history until Judaism recognises the authentic messianic truth of Jesus's ministry and incarnation.

This second scenario can lead to one of two logical consequences. The first is that of the elimination of Israel from the otherwise captive community of man. The possible programme for such elimination either by violent destruction or forced conversion is, as we know, all too clearly set out in the writings and preaching of certain Church Fathers. It runs through early and medieval Christianity as a perennial black thread.

The second alternative, fashionable since Auschwitz, is that of Christian patience and self-questioning. The messianic purposes of Christ the Son of God were not accomplished either in His earthly sojourn or in His resurrection. They are a continuous, incomplete process which will find fulfilment only when Judaism enters *freely* into the *Ecclesia*, only when synagogue and church are united in a common tabernacle. Till that day, Christianity itself is a fragmentary, often self-contradictory and culpable institution. The Jew is sacred, he must be preserved from harm, just because the potentiality of the truly ecumenical contains within itself the only access to the genuine realisation of God's promise in and through Christ. This, for example, seems to be the reading of history in the later work of Karl Barth. It is emphatically present in such contemporary ecumenical theologians of hope as Jürgen Moltmann.

THESE SEVERAL SCENARIOS—call them metaphoric constructs, symbolic dramatisations, doctrinal mythologies, or what you will—are enormous in their implications. Or, to enforce the connotations of that word: they are charged with enormity. Even the present-day proposals of patience and conciliation are overlaid with social and psychological tension. Barth's famous formula: *Israel leidet an Gott* ("Israel is sick 'with' God" or "Israel's sickness is God") is ambiguous, and carries with it a burden of terror. Israel's

"God-sickness" infects not only itself, in a way which can be construed as that of a metaphysical-transcendent privilege (God, through Abraham and Moses, chose the Jewish people to be the particular carriers of His "virus"). It can also be held to infect other men, to render the human condition in some central respect *incurable*.

SO FAR AS OUR EVIDENCE GOES, and in an historical development which remains largely enigmatic, the Jewish people invented monotheism. In radical hostility to all surrounding creeds and cultures, Judaism originated, and identified its own destiny with, the concept of an infinite, intangible, invisible, ethically imperative God. And of a God inseparable not only from every moment of the individual human being's day, but from the meaning and purpose of political and social history. In the Sermon on the Mount, in his parables, Jesus the Jew reiterated, sharpened to apocalyptic extremity, the moral demands, the uncompromising imperative of altruism, of self-sacrifice, present in the Mosaic Law and in the visionary rigour of the Prophets. This summons to abnegation—to the abolition of the ego and of private property and privilege—this annunciation of the inevitable, sacrificially-prepared coming of the kingdom of justice on earth, constitutes the core of that utterly Judaic secular messianism which we call Marxism. When Marx asks that man "exchange love for love, and justice for justice", he is speaking the exact language of Isaiah, of Amos, of the anarchist from Nazareth and Galilee.

Three times, Judaism has confronted Western man with the merciless claims and exactions of the ideal. Three times—in its invention of monotheism, in the message of the radical Jesus, in Marxism and messianic-socialism—Israel has asked of ordinary men and women more than human nature wishes to give; more, it may be, than it is organically and psychically able to give. Nothing is more cruel than the blackmail of perfection. We come to hate, to fear most those who demand of us a self-transcendence, a surpassing of our natural and common limits of being. Our hate and fear are the more intense precisely because we know the absolute rightness, the ultimate desirability of the demand. In failing to respond adequately, we fail ourselves. And it is of deep-lying self-hatreds that hatreds spring.

It is not, I believe, as Deicide, as "God-killer", that the Jew has been loathed and feared in the Christian civilisation of the West (though that hideous attribution does play its part). It is as *inventor* of God; it is as spokesman for and remembrancer of an almighty, all-seeing, all-demanding Deity. It is because Judaism has kept man awake, as do the Prophets in the sleeping city. (Sigmund Freud would even take away from us the innocence of our dreams.) It is because he has said to man, thrice over, "Be better than you are lest God curse you for your weakness and backsliding"; "Love your neighbour as yourself even if every instinct in you bids otherwise"; "Lose your life so that you may gain it in the kingdom of justice"; "Empty creation of those manifold, intelligible, supernatural presences with which polytheism and the Greek imagination had peopled the earth; worship

instead a desert god, inaccessible to understanding, a god of whom you may not even make a mental image. . . ." Reportedly, Hitler said in his table-talk: "The Jews invented conscience." Which is simply another way of saying: "The Jew invented God." For this crime, what forgiveness?

MINDS TRAINED to reason, to an empirical view of evidence, find it difficult to grasp the possessive force of doctrine, even where—or especially where—such doctrine seems irrational and foreign to rational and evidential proof. The force, the obsessive depth of a doctrine become greater as this doctrine passes into the individual and collective unconscious in the guise of symbol and metaphor. Such symbolic and metaphoric obsessions with the psyche become virulent when the doctrine which they represent has lost or begun to lose its own plausibility and intellectual coherence.

This is only an apparent paradox. It is when they are exhausted or degenerating that organs and muscle tissue secrete contagious and maleficent substances into the human body. So it was that the original Pauline and Patristic theology of Jew-hatred, together with the more general and even deeper-lying resentment of monotheism and sacrificial morality, took on their terrible, festering virulence precisely as Christianity and a belief in God as such began receding from the spiritual habits and intellectual-political adherence of Western civilisation. There is a perfect logic in the anti-Semitism of a Voltaire. There is a clear pattern in the fact that the Auschwitz-world erupts out of the subconscious, collective obsessions of an increasingly agnostic, even anti- or post-Christian society. Long-buried, and freed of doctrinal inhibitions and abstractions, the symbols and metaphors which cluster around the Judaic invention and "killing" of God (the two are, psychologically, twinned) turned murderous.

THIS HYPOTHESIS cannot be "proved"; the evidence for it is not of an empirical or quantifiable kind. What it does, I believe, is to provide a framework of reference, a measure of depth in some sense corresponding to the phenomenology of the Shoah. Only a theological-metaphysical scale of values, only an acute awareness of the life-force of theological-metaphysical metaphor and symbolism (even vestigial) in Western collective consciousness and subconsciousness, can hope to throw some light—I do not lay claim to more—on the aetiology, on the causal dynamics of Jew-hatred and of the Auschwitz experience as these arose from inside the core of European history and culture.

No other approach gives intelligible access to the National Socialist axiom that the eradication of the Jew and of Judaism from Europe was a goal worth achieving even at the cost of the (temporary) destruction of the German nation-state. No other hypothesis will help us understand the widespread, the almost total, indifference of support with which this homicidal policy met throughout Europe, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union. In regard to "the Jewish problem", Nazism spoke out loud and enacted what Christian and post-

Christian Europe had long harboured as an obsessive, half-avowed dream and fantasy. And it is, I suggest, only a theological-metaphysical category of analysis which provides any possibility of understanding the survival, the flourishing of Jew-hatred where there are no Jews left. Ghosts are of particular menace when they emerge from within oneself.

It is, therefore, no accident that the theological-metaphysical levels of language, of metaphor, of symbolism should be the foundation and constant resource of the one writer who, to my knowledge, has not only taken us to the unspeakable centre of the Shoah-experience, but—and this is far more difficult and important—has located the sense of that experience within the definition of man, of history, and of human speech. Only a Jew compelling himself to write in German could have brought this about, as, before him, only a Jew writing in German could be Kafka the prophet. That Paul Celan is also among the greatest poets in the German tongue, indeed in modern European literature (being, perhaps, an even more *necessary* poet than was Rilke); that Celan alone can stand beside Hölderlin in both his poetry and his prose—is almost an extraneous wonder. The necessary and sufficient condition for Celan's poems is the situation of all human saying after the Shoah, a situation which Celan lived and articulated in the absent face of God. In this one supreme witness—"Wer", he asks "zeugt für den Zeugen" ("Who bears witness for the witness?")—the fate of the Jew, the night-charged genius of the German language, of the idiom of Auschwitz and Belsen, a profound intimacy with the Hebraic and the Yiddish legacy, coalesced; and they coalesced around the central criteria of the theological and the metaphysical orders of questioning.

There is hardly a poem or parable or address by Paul Celan which would not serve to illustrate this point. If I cite the famous "Psalm", it is because of its unsurpassed immensity of implication and nakedness of expression.

*Niemand knetet uns wieder aus Erde und Lehm,
niemand bespricht unsern Staub.
Niemand.*

*Gelobt seist du, Niemand.
Dir zulieb wollen
wir blühn.
Dir
entgegen.*

*Ein Nichts
waren wir, sind wir, werden
wir bleiben, blühend:
die Nichts—, die
Niemandrose.*

*Mit
dem Griffel seelenhell,
dem Staubfaden himmelswüst,
der Krone rot
vom Purpurwort, das wir sangen
über, o über
dem Dorn.*

In rough, inadequate paraphrase:

*No-one kneads us again out of earth and loam,
No-one bespeaks our dust.
No-one.*

*Praise unto thee, No-one.
For love of you will
we bloom.
Towards/against
You.*

*A nothing
were we, are we, will
we remain, blooming:
No-one's-rose.*

*With
the stylus soul-bright
the dust-thread sky-waste,
the crown reddened
by the purple word, which we sang
above, o above
the thorn.*

IT IS NOT MY AIM to add yet another to the manifold commentaries and exercises in paraphrase which Celan's famous text has elicited. The very word *Niemandrose* has passed into the German language and into the inward history of Jewish consciousness. All I wish to do is to underline what is evident: the radically theological and metaphysical (in the etymological sense of the transcendent) character of Celan's idiom and field of referral—here a stricter term than "reference".

The identification of the Creator with "No-one" and "nothingness" reaches into the ambiguous heart of both ascetic piety and kabbalistic speculation. It bears simultaneous witness to the inconceivable, unimaginable, unspeakable, anti-metaphoric tenor of the God of Israel, and to the enigma of His withdrawal from that making of man, that shedding of Adam—*aus Erde und Lehm*—which, according to certain kabbalistic theories, represented a tragic self-division within God Himself. The liturgic-formulaic praise of the Lord—*Gelobt seist du, Niemand*—is at once of exemplary piety and resignation and of ultimate rebellion. The Jew in the *Aschenglorie* (another key Celan word) of the death-camps, "blooms" both *towards* God—in *that* place, at *that* hour—and blooms "against" God. *Entgegen* signifies "towardness" and "opposition".

The "nothingness" of the Jew at Auschwitz is, in a sense, the nothingness of man before God created him; it is the nothingness which constitutes every individual extinction; it is the nothingness, the zero-point of history for the Jewish people in the hand of its killers. Yet it is a nothingness "in bloom", a terrible flowering towards and against the "No-oneness" of God's absence.

It is this accusation out of ash, this blossoming indictment which, alone, tells against the finality of annihilation. It is not

only, counter to Ezekiel, that there shall be no resurrection for the slain Jews; it is, more hideously, that there will be no bespeaking of their dust.² That tremendous phrase carries a twofold charge. *Bespricht unsern Staub* refers to God's breathing of life into the clay of Adam, to God's "saying of being", in the precise sense in which Hellenistic Judaism will develop the concepts of *pneuma* and of *Logos*. But *besprechen* also means "to talk about", "to talk to" (as one "addresses oneself to" a topic). No one—not, above all, God Himself—will speak to the condition of Auschwitz, will speak about it in adequate witness or commemoration. The absence of God from the Shoah is also His silence in the face of the unremembered dead, an unremembrance which makes of their death a double annihilation.

It is only the victims themselves, in the red flowering of their anonymous, unspeakable deaths, who can rescue God from the void of His silence. Theirs is "the purple word", blood-soaked and royal, theirs is the song over the thorn, the living mystery of the *Niemandesrose* above the lacerating murderousness of "the thorn". The Song of Solomon is present here, as is also, in a tragic, distancing discretion of allusion, that crown of thorns worn by the Nazarene. Celan has written a psalm out of Auschwitz which is simultaneously an "anti-psalm", exactly as matter postulates and collides with anti-matter. The Jew in the Shoah speaks to and against the non-speaking, the unspeaking of God. So long as the Jew addresses God, God must listen. It may be that that compelled listening has, in the Auschwitz-world, become the fragile thread—*der Staubfaden*—whereby hangs the existence, the survival of God in a heaven, in a cosmos, laid waste (*himmelswüst*). If, in the Christ-passion, a divine being, a Son of God and of Man, is held to have died *for* man, so in the Shoah, the Jewish people ("Radix, Matrix")—

(Wurzel
Wurzel Abrahams. Wurzel Jesse. Niemandes
Wurzel—o
unser.)

(Root
Root of Abraham, root of Jesse, No-one's
Root—o
ours.)

—can be seen, understood, to have died *for* God, to have

taken upon itself the inconceivable guilt of God's indifference, or absence, or impotence.

Such concepts are not amenable to rational analysis. Even as Celan's Shoah-poems are not amenable to critical paraphrase or equalising interpretation. We move here in the sphere of lived metaphor, of language *beside itself*: which is one of the (wholly insufficient) images or tropes whereby we can come nearer the question with which I began: that of the very possibilities of human discourse in regard to God and to the Shoah—a duality which has, for the Jew, been made an irreparable unison. To ask what, if any, are such possibilities is to ask metaphysically and theologically. It is to recognise the essential inadequacy of pragmatic-positivist levels of argument.

This does not mean that any viable answer will be forthcoming. In Paul Celan's suicide (in Paris, in 1970), at the height of his powers, lies more than a hint of overwhelming desolation. How can a Jew speak of the Shoah in the language of his murderers? How can he speak of it any other language? How can he speak of it at all? Under stress of ultimate need, but of a need which batters in vain against the outermost confines of the human word, Celan's late poems enter a vocabulary, a syntax, a semantic mode, inaccessible to most of us. They are written in a tongue "north of the future". It may be that the Shoah has eradicated the saving grace, the life-giving mystery of meaningful metaphor in Western speech and, correlatively, in that highest organisation of speech which we call poetry and philosophic thought. There would be a just logic and a logic of justice in such eradication. Or it may be that the compulsion to articulacy within Judaism, the commandment of dialogue even with, even against, a mute God, will persist.

IT IS MY BELIEF that such persistence, with all that it implies not only for the precarious survival of Judaism, but for that, no less precarious, of our civilisation as a whole, depends on the seminal force, on the haunting tenacity of the metaphysical and the theological presences in our psyche.

The question of Auschwitz is far greater than that of the pathology of politics or of economic and social-ethnic conflicts (important as these were). It is that of the conceivable existence or non-existence of God, of the "No-one" who made us, who did not speak out of the death-wind, and who is now on trial. In that court, which is the court of man in history, how can the language spoken in indictment or defence, in witness or denial, be one from which His absence is absent, be one in which no psalm can be spoken against Him?

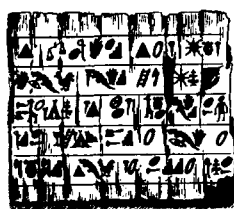
² In his valuable bilingual edition of Paul Celan's poetry (Carcenet, 1983), Michael Hamburger in his translation of "Psalm" inexplicably renders this line as "conjured out of the dust".

DISCUSSION

The Language of Politics

Where Bryan Magee Goes Astray

By Max Beloff



BRYAN MAGEE ("The Language of Politics", ENCOUNTER, May 1986) is a philosopher by vocation who was for nearly a decade a Member of Parliament—an unusual combination. It is perhaps not surprising that he found what is incumbent upon a politician in the matter of the use of words unacceptable to a philosopher.

Words coined at one juncture are used, whether in the abstract or as Party labels, at a much later period of time when the economic and social circumstances put quite different issues upon the political agenda. Mr Magee admits that it is probable that any new and more suitable verbal currency will come into existence in the same way as did Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism and Communism in the 1830s: that is to say, "piecemeal, uncoordinated at first, and not recognisable as a general phenomenon until some time after the event." I am sure he is right, and I suspect it is already happening. What I find more doubtful is his adjuration to "teachers or writers or broadcasters" to arouse awareness of the problem and to insist on using "a realistic vocabulary, taking care to say what we mean, and avoiding splurge-words like 'Capitalist' and 'Socialist'", except when hedged round with the necessary qualifications to give them precision.

Perhaps my reason for feeling that Mr Magee's worries are not well-founded lies in a difference of academic approach. As someone with no tincture of philosophical training, but a professional historian who came into politics very late in life, I do not find the same difficulty in using the only vocabulary that we have for political purposes while, to be sure, recognising its inadequacies. I am, of course, as an historian fully aware of the changes that have taken place in the meaning of the words we use and in the programmes and appeal of the parties who use them as labels. I am also aware that the usages differ from country to country and even within the same linguistic field. A Liberal in today's England, for instance, has no more in common with a Liberal in Australia or the USA than with a Liberal in Italy.

Mr Magee thinks that a political vocabulary should

correspond as closely as possible to the vocabulary of science or technology, or indeed of ordinary daily life. If we say *hydrogen*, *a valve*, *a loaf of bread*, we are in no danger of being misunderstood—it is to no one's advantage that we should be. But political words and phrases do not merely have an emotive content; they are indeed often coined by opponents of the ideas or parties thus designated, but that is an essential part of them and cannot be eliminated in the hope of attaining a neutral accuracy.

Mr Magee's article is based upon a foreshortened view of history in which a decisive role is attributed to the First Industrial Revolution and the reactions to it, in which Mr Magee sees the genesis of the new political vocabulary of the 1830s which we still have with us. But this overlooks the obvious fact that even these important neologisms are only a contribution to a process of political argument and concept-building which goes back to biblical times and to classical Greece and Rome. Are not monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, anarchy, tyranny, or law itself at least as important parts of our mental political universe as the words with which Mr Magee makes such play?

Indeed, if one turns from Mr Magee to the actual writings and debates of the 1830s and the succeeding decades—to Tocqueville and Bagehot—one finds that their pre-occupations and presumptions were quite different from those Mr Magee would have us suppose. They had little to do with industrialism, more with the social consequences of the weakening of ecclesiastical authority; more with the moral basis of political society than with material distribution.

By the last third of the century it is true that a different set of issues presented themselves. Here again, Mr Magee's curious lack of an historical perspective leads him astray. What he says about the term "Social Democrat" is made totally unreal by his concentration on the use of the term in English, of which he finds the first example in 1877. But by that time the German followers of Lassalle and Marx had come together to form the German Social Democratic Party; by the end of the century the Second International had united it with political parties in other countries, all likewise of Marxist allegiance. Until the First World War broke up the unity of the European working class which the International had postulated, Social Democracy and Marxism were identical. The rise to power of Social Democratic parties in Scandinavia may indeed have given the term "more liberal connotations" and paved the way for its current use by Mr Magee's party in Britain, but historically speaking this is merely a rather marginal postscript.

THE OTHER MAJOR WEAKNESS is in Mr Magee's attempt to tack on to his argument one about "Nationalism". He does not pause to reflect that this is not a word competing with the others he discusses. They deal with how a given society should be organised internally. Nationalism deals with the even more fundamental question of what should be the constituents and boundaries of the society itself. It can, as Mr Magee points out, emphasise similarities and hence act as a unifying factor, as in 19th-century Germany or Italy, or underscore dissimilarities such as brought about the

American Civil War and made so hard the process of state-building in India and Sri Lanka and much of Africa. When he comes to refer to its potential for destructiveness, Mr Magee for all his philosophical acumen reveals himself as just another typical adherent of the Centre-Left—I do not find the Left-Right antithesis as misleading as he does. He says that “in general human beings would rather have self-government than good government if forced to choose. . . .” For that conviction he gives no empirical evidence. Perhaps Ugandans preferred to be ruled by Idi Amin or Milton Obote rather than by Sir Andrew Cohen. But to get their answer, Mr Magee would have to conjure up the spirits from the mass graves of that unfortunate country, and that does not exactly come within the scope of his philosophy.

In fact the choice between good government and self-government never actually presents itself. The drive towards self-government in the sense of “national self-determination” is fuelled from two sources. One is the belief that this is actually the way to get good government—a hope based on the understandable, if sometimes fallacious, belief that one will be better governed by people of one’s own race or creed than by strangers. The other source, equally important, is the exploitation of this belief by individuals or groups who see independence as opening to them opportunities of power (and profit) which are otherwise precluded. But since the human geography of the world is not the product of philosophers but of a history of movement still in process, boundaries are rarely tidy. So that the acquisition of self-government is rarely the end of the story. More often than not—sometimes at once, sometimes after some delay—triumphant nationalisms generate other nationalisms reacting against their claims.

Most of politics consists of trying to solve problems that may have no solutions—general disarmament without giving a premium to aggressors; general welfare without destroying the will to work on which it depends; rapid technological progress without social dislocations too unbearable to contemplate. It is the problems that are difficult. It is not that we lack a vocabulary to describe either them or the rival families of ideas that compete for the right to attempt a solution.

—Hard & Soft—

London

“THE HARD RIGHT chairman of the inquiry team, Charlie Turnock, wanted a mass purge of Militants, starting in Liverpool” (from a report in “The Observer” on the Labour party).

That the term “hard Right” can be applied to members of the Labour party shows that the terms “Left” and “Right” have now lost all meaning. What is the difference between a hard Right member of the Labour party and a soft Left member of the Conservative party?

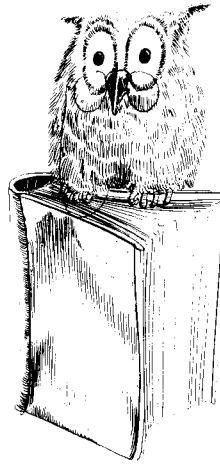
Incidentally, it is time people stopped referring to members of Militant, the Socialist Workers’ party and other Trotskyite sects as “the Loony Left.”

Many of these people are not loonies at all. They are not only perfectly sane (at any rate in a clinical sense), but determined, hard-working and extremely dangerous.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

The Rhetoric of Ideas

By Roger Scruton



RYAN MAGEE argues in his ENCOUNTER essay that “we are living through the breakdown of the very form of society in which our most familiar political concepts and categories were formed, and to the realities of which their significance had formerly been related. That is why, inevitably, they are ceasing to be serviceable. . . .” He adds interestingly that it may not now be possible “to form a clear perception and understanding of the radical transformation of any society in terms of the concepts and categories that came to birth within that society during its period of transformation.” Magee singles out various terms which, he believes, illustrate his thesis—and in particular the terms “Socialism” and “Conservatism”, both of which, he notes, made their first appearance in the English language in 1835.

Magee is surely right that many terms of political debate are so burdened by untrue theories and abandoned attitudes as to be useless in understanding either the problems which unite the practitioners of modern politics or the solutions which divide them. Among such terms are many of those employed by Magee. When he writes of the “breakdown” and “radical transformation” of society, he too is speaking the language of the 19th century; and he too is assuming that economic change is of such fundamental importance as to amount to a total transformation of the social world.

Looking back, however, one may be struck by a fact that is far more remarkable than the fact of economic transformation, and far more worthy of political assessment: the fact that so much, in Britain, remained the same, throughout the period of the “Industrial Revolution”. Whether or not we agree with those “New Right” historians, such as Jonathan Clark, who argue that the Industrial Revolution—as described, theorised and mythologised by socialists—did not occur, we ought at least to recognise the fact that the Common Law of England endured uninterrupted through it, as did the Church of England, the institutions of Parliament, the conception of British sovereignty, the ideal of aristocracy, the cultural inheritance enshrined in our language, and the basic loyalty to the Crown. In my view such facts are more important than the changes introduced by the manufacturing towns; and if Magee is right in thinking that we do now live in a time of “radical transformation”, this is not because of the technology which promises so great a change in the patterns of employment (vast and awe-inspiring though this possibility might be), but because power is now likely to be captured by those who despise the laws and institutions of England, who have sympathy neither for

Parliament nor for the Crown, and who are animated by resentment and even hatred towards the cultural and political heritage of the nation.

LANGUAGE MAY BE “serviceable”, as Magee puts it, in many ways; and in the context of politics, two ways in particular command our attention. We use language both to describe politics, and to engage in it. This second use of language—traditionally known as “rhetoric”—is far less responsive to argument, proof, and evaluation than the first. Consider the term “Capitalist”, which Magee rightly wishes to abandon, as inapplicable to modern economies. The fact is that this term has *always* been just as misleading as it is today. It belongs to a theory that is intellectually confused, and no more true of 19th-century society than it is true of the modern world. To describe our societies as “Capitalist” is to assume that the private disposition of capital is and has been their *decisive* feature. In fact, however, that feature is simply one aspect of a far more important and more general phenomenon: the existence of free markets, dependent upon a legal disposition of property rights, and upon a public morality of enterprise, responsibility, and contractual obligation. Even in the last century, the idea that “Socialism” and “Capitalism” defined the single and decisive choice lying before mankind was both an intellectual nonsense and a moral fraud.

Nevertheless, that idea did produce the greatest political transformation that the world has ever known. The theories of Marx were persuasive enough to provide the first mental impact; once adopted, the language gathered its own momentum, and swept people along in a jubilant flow of slogans. As the movement grew, so did its rhetoric: to the Marxian categories were added those of Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, and Mao. And recent history has shown that Communist rhetoric has lost none of its power over the minds of the ignorant, the disaffected, and the oppressed.

Study the publications of the Soviet *Novosti* Press Agency (and in particular its *Short Guide to Political Terms*, designed largely for the African market), and you will see the fine art to which the manipulation of language has now been elevated—the art of depriving words of all responsiveness to reality, and so destroying the interest in truth. The purpose of Communist rhetoric is to forestall opposition, by securing an unshakeable bridgehead in language. Words are defined by the conclusions that are to be expressed through them. Liberalism, for example, is “a political and ideological trend which unites supporters of the bourgeois-parliamentary system and freedom for capitalist enterprise.” If you accept that definition, you can no longer use the term “Liberalism” as an instrument in the battle against Communist ideas.

TO PUT IT SHORTLY, Communism denies opposition not only the right to live, but also the right to die protesting. It has tried to ensure that the words of political discourse can be used only to express dogmas of its own—not because it believes those dogmas to be true, but because it seeks to displace truth from politics, and to use language itself as an instrument of power.

I do not share Bryan Magee’s confidence that changes in political theory will do anything either to neutralise or to destroy the dominant political rhetoric. A recent working conference of “Labour Briefing”—a faction within the Labour Party with considerable and growing influence—issued the following injunction:

“Against the racist and anti-union violence of the police, and the threat posed by the armed forces, workers must counterpose demands for the *disbanding* of those armed bodies of capitalist repression, and their replacement by *workers’ militias* and *community self-policing*.”

The terms of this utterance, impeccably obedient to *Novosti* guidelines, are mythopoeic. We know that the “workers” form no coherent class; that the members of “Labour Briefing” are not workers in any real sense (although they would make excellent members of “workers’ militias”); that the idea of “capitalist repression” is confused, and the theory which explains it totally exploded. But what good does all that knowledge do, when the political battle is conducted in terms that are impermeable to truthful utterance?

The need is not for a new social or political *theory*, but for a countervailing rhetoric—one that will both stimulate the loyalties of the electorate, and at the same time remain sensitive to the truth. That is the task to which the defenders of constitutional government (among whom Magee is prominent) have yet to apply themselves. Theory will not save us; and my own fear is that, when we find our rhetoric, the time for using it will have passed.

Words Splurge, Ideas Urge

By Noel O’Sullivan



BRYAN MAGEE BELIEVES that the world has changed greatly, and is now changing with ever increasing rapidity; that our key political words, categories, and concepts have been long since outmoded by the scale

and speed of this change; and that for the present we are doomed to remain lost, or “in suspension”, until the emergence of new philosophers and visionaries—“the next Karl Marx, so to speak”—who can tell us what is happening to us, and provide us with new concepts with which to describe reality.

It may be granted straight away that the past casts a shadow, and that our political words often wear the tatters of old and irrelevant causes; and Magee is right, more generally, to stress the confused character of our political vocabulary. Nevertheless, he makes three highly problematic assump-

tions, which cast doubt not only on his interpretation of the origins of the confusion but also on the remedy that he proposes for it.

1. The first problem concerns Magee's view of the general function of the political vocabulary.

"On every side [he writes] one comes up against this fact that political reality does not correspond to the vocabulary we have for describing it."

But is the purpose of our political vocabulary to describe an unequivocal reality which exists independently of us, as this implies? On the contrary, the political problem itself only arises because the very nature of political reality is a matter open to radical disagreement. Magee appears to ignore this familiar fact, largely because his tendency to treat the political vocabulary as a descriptive tool obscures its main function—which is to provide a vehicle for making political choices, advocating ideals, and winning support for policies proposed.

In an historical perspective, the same point may be made by saying that Magee approaches politics and the political vocabulary in the spirit of Plato, to the extent that both believe there is an "objective reality" to be discovered. Not surprisingly, he also shares Plato's consternation at the spectacle of a world in which words and concepts have a more

elusive and slippery character than one who believes in "objective reality" might wish.

Aristotle's criticism of this way of thinking is worth recalling. He pointed out that the problem was not a changing world or an outmoded vocabulary, but Plato's own perspective. In the nature of things, Aristotle said, many interpretations of political reality are possible, and therefore many meanings of political words as well. There was consequently no reason to mistake—as Plato had done, and as Magee seems to do—diversity of meaning for meaninglessness.

2. The second problem concerns Magee's assumption that rapid social change has been the primary source of the confusion he detects in our vocabulary. But that is not the case: the real source of confusion has been a growing forgetfulness (inspired by a mixture of complacency and indifference) of the two related issues which were once the central core of political debate. One is the constitutional problem; the other is the creation and preservation of means of limiting the abuse of power.

Since World War II, however, these problems have increasingly been replaced by concern with Welfare and management of the Economy. Whether this is a good or bad thing need not be discussed here; what is relevant at present is only the fact that the issues of political principle which

Sociology Speaks

Frankfurt-am-Main

A CERTAIN VERVE, or nerve, is the hallmark of the pamphleteer, and Jürgen Habermas has made a name for himself with good reason. His most recent pamphlet has been published as a special supplement to the liberal-left Hamburg weekly, "Die Zeit", and in it he takes on nothing less than the whole problem of 8 May 1945, or the consequences of World War II. The sharpness of his attack, which did not exclude almost all of the leading articles in the press, concentrated on "the kind of anti-Communism which in these days justifies a tendentious selectivity in our attempts at reconciliation." This political sentiment has, he charges, always been "associated in Germany with the most obtuse prejudices. . . ."

NOT THAT the celebrated sociologist (and professor of philosophy, mostly of Marxist provenance) wants to be misunderstood. And it would surely be mistaken to surmise that—in his eyes, or in ours—the rejection of "anti-Communist tendencies" in connection with the memorials of 8 May 1945 constituted in any way an approval, at that time or in this, for post-War Soviet policies or the Moscow line. Accordingly he proceeds to underline his rejection, well-known from his era as ideologue of the New Left, of something which he vaguely calls "bureaucratic socialism". A remarkable formulation this, and one would have thought that over all these years something else, a little more precise, might have occurred to such a distinguished dialectician.

WHAT IS "bureaucratic"? And who are the bureaucrats? Are they the chaps sitting in office buildings around the world, all with their shirt-sleeves rolled up? Are these the kind of desk-bound fellows whose policies drove the Hungarians (including presumably, non-bureaucratic socialists) to make a bloody insurrection in 1956? And were

they the same kind of bureaucrats who marched into Budapest to suppress it? Is it a pure and simple bureaucracy which sets out how Soviet citizens should live (and die) within the confines of the Gulag Archipelago? And is it the same faceless shirt-sleeved crowd that is taking pot-shots at the rebels in the mountains of Afghanistan, and in earlier years got their in- and out-baskets mixed up to eliminate the peasantry "en masse" when they were only trying to send a message to the "Kulaks"? One begins to recognise the type. Those harmless "bureaucrats" who drive Solzhenitsyn into exile and Sakharov to an isolated room in Gorki. Those bland administrators who mix drugs and order injections in the various psychiatric prison hospitals of the USSR.

IF JÜRGEN HABERMAS believes that, he will believe anything. Tens of millions have suffered under a repressive police-state totalitarian régime, and the best that our sociologist and philosopher can come up with to describe it is "bureaucratic socialism".

Dare one ask why? But one question will only lead to another, when perhaps the answer is very simple. Dr Habermas could always say: I am a professor of sociology, and my profession is to understand the world. Beyond all moral and ethical judgments, there are the categories of social science. The most relevant thing that one, as a student of society, could possibly pronounce on the phenomenon of Socialism, or Communism of the Moscow variety, is that it is bureaucratic. That is a verdict—which is uncluttered by such "obtuse prejudices" as propagandists, victims, refugees, and historians may fall prey to—and is arrived at through sheer professional and academic competence.

The sociologist speaks: Down with bureaucrats!

Jürgen Busche

in the FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

were formerly associated with key political terms such as Conservatism, Socialism, and Liberalism have largely disappeared. The result has been that political disagreement is now only about means, rather than ends. It would be more accurate, in other words, to say that we now have an *unprincipled* political vocabulary, rather than (as Magee believes) an *outmoded* one.

Not everyone, of course, would share Magee's assumption that this is a bad thing. Many, on the contrary, have regarded it as symptomatic of the consequence of a deep social consensus which naturally carries with it a blurring of traditional political identities and concepts, and have welcomed the softening of some at least of the jagged ideological edges which the key terms in the vocabulary once exhibited.

3. The third problem concerns Magee's attempt to indicate the kind of great changes which he considers have rendered our concepts irrelevant. These include the emergence of a Post-Industrial social order which no longer corresponds to ideas which were once entertained about "the structure of Capitalism", and the anachronistic character of Nationalism in a world which he believes increasingly requires supra-national decision-making. Since these are offered only as illustrations of a more general theme, however, detailed consideration of them may be omitted, in order to concentrate on Magee's main contention. This is that any real insight into what is happening, either internally or internationally, is only possible when new sages appear who can

"respond to the advent of a new kind of society with a new political vision, provide us with a radically new analysis, new categories of thought, and new terms for them. . . ."

Do we, it must be asked, really need all these new sages? The answer must be no, for the simple reason that we are unlikely to learn much from new ones until we have learnt to recognise and pay attention to the ones we already have. Unfortunately, Magee's archetypal sage is Marx—unfortunately, because this unduly impoverishes his awareness of the rich resources which our intellectual tradition already offers for understanding all the changes to which he refers.

Three of these in particular—Tocqueville, Nietzsche, and Max Weber—are more likely to create a sense of *déjà vu* than of incomprehensibly rapid change when we consider their view of what is happening.

From Tocqueville we learn that the moving force of democracy is not liberty but equality, and that this egalitarian obsession tends to create a wholly new form of arbitrary government whose incursions we are unlikely to notice until it

is too late. Tocqueville's explanation for this is that modern despotism is historically unique in the unprecedented comfort, prosperity, and security which it provides. We are greatly misled, therefore, if we associate it with any of the forms of cruelty which have hitherto characterised despotism, or expect it to resemble Orwell's *1984*, with brainwashing and Room 101 at its core. Interestingly enough, Tocqueville himself emphasised that there was no word in the modern political vocabulary adequate for this new despotism; but that did not prevent him from identifying and describing the phenomenon itself in graphic terms.

In Weber's case, we are reminded that the main cultural characteristic of the age is what he termed "the disenchantment of the world", meaning by this that ours is a secular culture which inevitably fails to satisfy deeper human spiritual requirements, and therefore constantly leaves our politics exposed to the emergence of extremist movements which claim to fill the spiritual vacuum, more especially in times of adversity.

From Nietzsche, finally, we learn that the very thing upon which our age prides itself most—viz. our moral idealism—contains the seeds of horrors of which we have as yet only seen the beginning. The product of this age is what Nietzsche called "the last man"—the man, that is, who has discovered comfort and righteous moral complacency, and loves them so much that he sacrifices the complexity, pain, and suffering of reality to the pleasant but grossly oversimplified world of ideological dreams and promises.

FAR FROM BEING OUTMODED, the concepts and categories of thinkers like these are becoming increasingly relevant. It is true, however, that a different, altogether more gloomy picture of our intellectual resources would emerge were it true that

"The greatest single contribution to our current political vocabulary to have been made by a nameable individual is . . . that contributed by Karl Marx."

The reason for Magee's sympathy towards Marxism is unclear. It is certainly not explained by his claim that "we have virtually all felt the touch" of the Marxist vision, since even if this is true, it does not indicate whether Marxism is a benign or pernicious influence.

Magee's closing lines, however, in which he characterises words like "Capitalist" and "Socialist" as "splurge-words", and urges us to avoid them, is very much to the point. The trouble is, however, that they have *always* been splurge-words. But that is another matter.

LANGUAGE

Wall-to-Wall Words

Temps Perdu & Time Present—By D. J. ENRIGHT



AT THE OUTSET, in 1957, the *Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary* was expected to occupy a single volume and take seven years to complete. The fourth and last volume of the work now appears,¹ 29 years later, the English language having proliferated, R. W. Burchfield says, at a greater rate than he

had originally judged, particularly on the technical and scientific side. Moreover, he decided to accommodate, as far as possible, the “sprawling vocabulary” of all the English-speaking countries. In this policy Burchfield has obeyed the *Zeitgeist*. A new quotation here, of 1982, has it that “Shakespeare becomes in a sense an ever-changing embodiment of the *Zeitgeist*”, and the same goes for dictionaries.

Among the new entries are *ye olde*; *stetson*; *wish-fulfilment*; *White House*; *sputnik*; *skyjacker*; *whiz(z)-kid*; *snogging*; *working girl* (slang or euphemism); *winter sport*; *yah boo* and variants; *wino* (orig. US, dating from 1915 as “wineoe”); *vodkatini*; *wimp* (missing from the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* and *Collins English Dictionary*); *word processor*; *xerox* (with an illustrative quotation—“Schoolgirls were dutifully filling in xeroxed, hand-written, one-word-answerable questionnaires”: A. S. Byatt, *Still Life*, 1985, bang up-to-the-minute); *xenophobia*; *VIP*; *yuppie*; *wall-to-wall* (including figurative use: “tons of literature—wall-to-wall Marx and Marcuse”: *Time*, 1977); and *vamp*, with a lush excerpt from *The Times*, 1973: “Exotic red flowers like the lips of vamps”, and also in the US slang sense of a volunteer fireman (origin unknown).

There is a lengthy buzz of *tele-* words, including *telephonitis* (Edward Kennedy “has telephonitis and he’s on the phone every night”: *Washington Post*, 1979) and *televisionary* (humorous), and a deal of computer cant, such as *trap-door*, means of gaining unauthorised access to confidential data, and *wysiwyg*, or “what you see is what you get” (the display-screen gives an accurate rendition of the printed page). *Video* and its combinations take up nearly six columns: *video-*

conference (i.e. *in absentia*); *video piracy*; *video nasty*; *videoporn*; *videophile*. There is no sign of “videophobe”, however.

This is a supplement, so when extra senses or quotations are supplied to words already in the *Oxford English Dictionary* you won’t find a definition on the spot. Unless, that is, the quotations constitute a definition, as they do in the case of *teste*, *zemindary*, and *verdure* (tapestry representing trees or foliage); but not with *wirble*, or *tribrachic*, or *twis(s)el* (which directs us to an example of “penelopize” in Vol. III of the *Supplement*), or *ubity* (“delete *Obs.*”): “Your influence is welcome at any hour in my ubity” (Auden, 1964). We are told that a project is in hand (forgive the antiquated terminology) to merge the twelve volumes of the *OED* with the four volumes of the *Supplement* in electronic form. Great, if you like electronic forms.

We must be grateful for Burchfield’s preference, as intimated in his preface, for the diachronic over the synchronic, even if we have to go to the entry on the latter to understand what is at issue. The meanings of words cannot be divorced from their history, the ways in which they have been used. Words worthy of the name exist in time, not at a time. The quotations, very many of them contributed by Marghanita Laski, are often striking in one way or another, comic or splendid, comprising an anthology of sorts. Thus: “Being sharpened by his death/To drink from the *wine-breath*/While our gross palates drink from the whole wine”: Yeats, 1922; Hopkins’s “There did storms not mingle? . . . *wolfsnow*, worlds of it, wind there?”, c. 1878; Virginia Woolf’s “*spider-thin* boats” skimming from side to side on the Serpentine, 1928; Lawrence’s “the Tchekov wimbly-wambly *wet-legs* all wiped out”, 1929; Joyce’s “nose *whiteflattened* against the pane”, 1922; Malcolm Lowry’s “You see, *unemolumented* but monumental”, 1933.

Among the multitudinous entries to do with *woman*, *woman’s magazine* sports this, from *The Spectator* (1958): “Ophelia’s infatuated woman’s magazine royalism rings with a specially hollow tinkle in Glen Byam Shaw’s production of *Hamlet*.” Under *soft-focus* we are treated to “Photographs looked freckled and corpse-like, soft-focus poses that might have been painters’ instant fossils” (Paul Theroux, 1978), and “This [play] . . . was full of winsome Irishness and soft-focus sentimentality” (*Listener*, 1979). *The New Yorker* (1976) provides a nice specimen of *Wardour-street* diction: “Bread

¹ *A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary. Volume IV: Se-Z.* Edited by R. W. BURCHFIELD. Clarendon Press, Oxford, £90.00.

and wine needs a man to fight and die . . . Us enchants he, but eke frightens.” And *zombie* ranges from “Zombi, the title whereby he [chief of Brazilian natives] was called, is the name for the Deity in the Angolan tongue”: Robert Southey’s *History of Brazil* (1819) to “‘I’m David Bowie’, he intones with a zomboid air”: *Sunday Times* (Colour Suppl., 1975).

The entry on *Thai* (“native name, meaning ‘free’”) is both informative—it was in 1939 that “Thailand” and “Thai” officially replaced “Siam” and “Siamese”—and astonishing: “McGonagall . . . had just had his prolific collection of bizarre poems translated into Russian, Chinese, Japanese and . . . Thai” (*Times*, 1977). The word “Siamese”, it seems, is now met only in conjunction with cats, twins, fighting fish, and a form of coupling or connector joint used in fire-fighting hoses and Jaguar exhausts.

The entry on *Singapore* is virtually confined to *Singapore sling* (gin and cherry brandy base), with illustrative passages extending from 1930 (*Savoy Cocktail Book*) onwards. During the ten years I spent in the island-republic I tasted not a single one, albeit draining quantities of Tiger Beer (“Time for a Tiger”)—which is not listed here, unlike *Tiger Milk*, a “Yugoslavian dessert wine made from over-ripe grapes” and unlike *to put a tiger in one’s tank*. One figurative phrase deriving from this last figurative phrase is aptly elucidated by the *New Zealand Tablet*, 1981: “Young girls must be made to realise that boys of the same age have a ‘tiger in their tank’ as far as sexual desire goes.”

Some supererogation is in evidence. It doesn’t seem especially significant that, for instance, Paul Theroux, or anyone else, should have used *Singaporean*, meaning a native or inhabitant of Singapore, in 1975; or that, in an added example of *Viennese*, Lord Harewood should have written in 1981, “Marion . . . talked fluent German (or rather Viennese) . . . rattling the guttural Viennese ‘r’ round her throat.” An excerpt from C. P. Snow, 1978—“He may have been a bit of a *voyeur* (he took extravagant pleasure in studying a love-object in bed)”—is to say the least rather quaint.

New recordings of common words like *underworld* and *warmonger* add to length rather than to knowledge. On the other hand, one of the quotations relating to *urolagnia* explains the word where the formal definition itself—“sexual pleasure derived from urination”—is oddly vague. Another quotation (from *The Spectator*, 1980) is totally unhelpful: “Was it his mother’s fault that he suffered from urolagnia?” Something in the milk, perhaps. But a sentence from *ENCOUNTER* (May 1980, p. 90, column two)—“Off we go, with me stumbling after him over the rough stony ground of the wadi bed”—does at least assure us that *wadi* has been used attributively in respectable circumstances. In fact it appeared, with a hyphen this time, in column one of the same page: “a wadi-bed full of scorpions and camel spiders.”

THERE IS MUCH TO BE learnt here, for if you learn about words you learn about life. Animal as well as human: *ze(e)donk* is the offspring of a male zebra and a female

donkey. It would be handy if *zonkey* denoted the offspring of a male donkey and a female zebra, but only *The New York Times* commits itself to that explicit interpretation. *Woodpecker* is an addendum, but as US and Australian military slang, first recorded in print in 1898, for a machine-gun. *Wrenaissance* signifies an architectural style influenced by that of Wren, “esp. as represented by some of the work of Sir Edwin Lutyens”; and *vulture* as a verb is declared no longer an endangered species: i.e. “delete *rare*”.

Concerning *whore-house* we are asked to ignore *Obs.* and read “Revived in recent (chiefly US) use”—though it is a character in Graham Greene’s *The Human Factor* (1978) who remarks, “If you want to fuck a black whore, why don’t you go to a whore-house in Lesotho or Swaziland?”—whereas with *whorish*, for *rare* or *Obs.* we are to read *arch.* (*Obs.* indicates obsolete, not obscene, and *arch.* not arch but archaic.)

Woo enters as a substantive, e.g. “to pitch a woo”, with an illustration from *The Guardian* (1968): “Couples making woo in motor-cars should be careful not to rock them too much.” *Wrangler* comes back as a proprietary name for jeans, and *versatile* appears in a new, slang guise: “both heterosexual and homosexual”, as does *thrombosis*: “with reference to traffic congestion”. A *weeny-bopper* is sometimes younger than a *teeny-bopper*, but “the two terms are freq. interchangeable”. *Whizzo* gets into the dictionary just as it’s going out of the language.

Some neologisms we must hope will soon pass into oblivion, among them *wimmin*—originally jocular and a shade patronising, as in H. G. Wells’s *History of Mr Polly*: “Wimmin’s a toss up”, but not any longer—and *underdoctored*, as in “underdoctored areas”. *Trudeaumania* stands condemned by one of its illustrations: “. . . has long since faded away in Canada”, *Time* (1976). *Thivish* and its variants (*Anglo-Ir.*, “ghost”) are not likely to be encountered often outside Yeats, and not very often inside him; but *Wulfrunian* is an elegant alternative to “Wolverhamptonian”.

It is a joy to meet *virtuous circle* (“all things work together for good”, as the other good book says), and *whydun(n)it*—the kind of story whose main interest lies in the motive, the psychology of the criminal—and even *workfare*, a policy requiring recipients of welfare benefits to do some work in exchange (“orig. and chiefly US”), whose bracing breeze has just reached these shores. It is proper, too, that we should be reminded that *vomitorium* is erroneously supposed to signify “a room in which ancient Romans are alleged to have vomited deliberately during feasts”; to do that you went outside.

Word and its bye-words occupy eight columns, and one of the examples of *wordsmen* (from William Safire, 1981) alludes to “Robert Burchfield, chief editor of the Oxford Dictionaries, known to wordsmen as ‘Superlex’”. Somewhat incestuously the 1976 *COD*’s definition of “seduce” features here as a later example of the use of *temptingness*. Among instances of “to blow one’s own trumpet” is a quotation from Patricia Roberts’s revolting novel, *Tender Prey* (1983): “I was not averse to blowing my own trumpet. Modesty is a fool’s game.”

Yes, there is much to be learnt, and some of it we might

prefer to remain ignorant of. Quite correctly, Burchfield includes indelicate and otherwise offensive terms, of which the mildest are *shitticisms*. (Robert Frost in a letter, 1936: "My contribution was the witticisms: yours the shitticisms.") *Shit* and its associates, taking up three new columns, is over-validated—six extracts from Brian Aldiss's *A Soldier Erect* alone—so that D. H. Lawrence's "Why doesn't somebody finally and loudly say Shit! to it all!" achieves a comic effect.

It is not the definitions that are unsavoury but the examples. Those relating to *tits* and *suck off* are superfluous and self-indulgent, though perhaps that last adjective should be kept for the demonstrations of *whack off*. While this is accounted US slang, the brightest quotation comes from *The Listener* (1969): "Fellatio with the Monkey does not present the same practical difficulties as whacking off in Momma's bathroom." *Zoophilia* poses a problem since in its senses it runs the gamut. Havelock Ellis (1906) talks of "the more or less sexual pleasure sometimes experienced . . . in the sight of copulating animals", while *Bloch's Sexual Life of Our Time* (1908) defines it as "a sexual inclination towards animals without actual sexual intercourse"; and Krafft-Ebing is credited with inventing the word "to denote sexual excitement caused by the stroking and fondling of animals." After all this it is disconcerting to find the RSPCA described as a "zoophilic organisation". (Incidentally, *spuugslang*, *spoewslang*, *spuwslang*, etc. is not a variety of dirty talk but a South African spitting snake.)

Not that Burchfield has gone out of his way to dig up naughty words. The 13 columns on *sex* and its combinations and permutations (cf. 31 on *super-* and over 40 on *sub-*) are relatively antiseptic. Thus, *sex change* (which, *The Times* opined c. 1960, might well seem "unprepossessing" as a subject for comedy), *sexism*, *sexational*, *sexcapade*, *sexploitation*, *sexpert* (though not an early poeticism of mine, "sexpert beyond sexperience"). *Sexduction* may sound like a coinage in the same line but turns out to be a phenomenon in microbiology, while *sexennium* is not a sexsaga or marathon orgy but merely a period of six years, however spent. *Vulg.* (as it used to be called) is sometimes in the mind of the beholder.

THE PRINCIPLES DETERMINING whether or not a word of foreign provenance is marked ||, "not naturalised, alien", remain unclear to me.

Weltschmerz and (rather oddly) *Weltanschauung* carry the sign, whereas *Volkslied* and *Wanderlust* do not. *Verbum* (*verb*) *sap.* and *sic transit* are considered alien, but not

Sursum corda, perhaps as being part of the Latin liturgy. Possibly *yen-yen*, since it is US slang and from Cantonese, "craving for opium", is self-evidently alien and doesn't need ||; and likewise *tsotsi* (thug, orig. unkn. but freq. said to be a corruption of "zoot suit", itself vividly defined and illustrated here), because it is specifically South African. Possibly *wongi* (a talk or speech) is unmarked because it is Australian (Aboriginal) and therefore naturalised in that country, just as *waiata* (a Maori song) is at home in New Zealand. And conceivably *wappie* (gambling game played with cards) is either obviously alien and doesn't need to be declared so or else is naturalised because West Indian. All the same, it might be thought that *sushi* has as much right to citizenship as *wasabi* (Japanese form of horse-radish, most notable for its use in sushi), and *vers d'occasion* rather more right than *trumeau* (pier-glass; stone pillar).

Some other words present here though without full rights are: *vespasienne* (a convenience we could do with more of); *violon d'Ingres* (a second string to one's fiddle?); *visagist(e)*, a pretentious word for cosmetician: let's hope it doesn't show its face too often; *tapette* (first noted, as an adjective, in *Vile Bodies*); *temps perdu* (in contexts of nostalgia: "The wizened wordsmith . . . was on the scent of *temps perdu*: in particular those heady years of the early Thirties", *Listener*, 1969), and the related *ubi sunt* (lit. crit., designating "a mood or theme in literature of lament for the mutability of things"); *Wein, Weib, und Gesang* (our native expression lacks the music of Strauss); *zikr*, Muslim ritual prayer; *Tsongdu*, Tibetan National Assembly; *ts'ao shu*, Chinese cursive script; *tutti quanti* (*tutti-frutti*, fair enough, is naturalised); and *zuppa*, plus *zuppa inglese*: "a rich trifle". A fine, affecting word is the German *Zugunruhe*, signifying restlessness during the migratory period, especially as evinced by caged birds.

THE TASK FACED, and accomplished, by R. W. Burchfield and his team defies the imagination. The proof-reading alone gives the mind to boggle. (Is "venera", as a noun, correct in a quotation? Not impossibly it is a US conflation of "veteran", "general", and "venereal".) The surprising thing is that the *Supplement*, this "lasting testament to the fruitfulness and inventiveness of the language of our age", has been a mere 29 years in the making.

The Editor announces that, retiring now from lexicography, he intends to devote himself to a reconsideration of English grammar. Hardly a rest-cure, one would think.

TELEVISION

A Case Study in Bias & Distortion

Channel Four's Film on Greece's Civil War—By RICHARD CLOGG

"We have to hold and dominate Athens. It would be a great thing for you to succeed in this without bloodshed if possible, but also with bloodshed if necessary."

Winston Churchill to General Scobie,
5 December 1944
(Public Record Office, Prem 3 212/11)

"We have to hold and dominate Athens, with bloodshed if necessary."

Winston Churchill, as quoted in
Greece—The Hidden War, Channel Four TV



A PART FROM THE BBC's partisan *Yesterday's Men*, few television documentaries can have caused such a stir as the TV South production *Greece—The Hidden War*, which was shown on Channel Four in three one-hour instalments

in January 1986. For the best part of six months a fierce controversy raged in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*. A similar, if rather less well-informed, row developed in Greece, despite the fact that the series has yet to be transmitted there. Nor is it ever likely to be shown, at least in its present form, in Greece or elsewhere, in the wake of a ban imposed by the Independent Broadcasting Authority, following a formal inquiry into the series by Channel Four.

Given that the programmes have caused such a furore and that they raise a number of important issues with regard to the television treatment of contemporary history, the ethics of documentary journalism, Channel Four's commitment to overall balance in its programming, and the IBA's regulatory function, an extended critique seems called for, together with some consideration of the historical context.

It goes without saying that the idea of looking at the troubled decade of the 1940s in Greece through the eyes of the vanquished in the civil war was a perfectly legitimate and, indeed, an imaginative one. The interviews with returning Communist refugees which made up the bulk of the programmes were usually interesting, occasionally revealing, and at times moving. But the makers, not content with allowing the voice of the Left to be heard, overlaid the series with a tendentious and all-too-often demonstrably inaccurate commentary. This sought to show that the only serious

resistance in wartime Greece was Communist-inspired and, furthermore, that the prime architects of the country's misfortunes during a decade of occupation and civil war were not so much the Germans (and their Italian and Bulgarian allies) as the British and, latterly, the Americans.

Many criticisms can legitimately be made of Britain's wartime policy towards Greece, but in *The Hidden War* anti-British bias assumes ludicrous proportions. Even the horrendous famine that struck down Greeks in their thousands during the winter of 1941-42 is laid at Britain's door. The Foreign Office did eventually allow a partial lifting of the blockade of Greece but of this we heard nothing; nor, more to the point, of the crucial fact that the root cause of the famine was not the British blockade but well-documented Nazi economic plunder. The Germans (and the Italians and Bulgarians), indeed, appear as more or less innocent bystanders in what is portrayed as essentially a clash between Wicked British Imperialists and the Forces of Progress in Greece, with the cynical Russians turning a blind eye to the fate of the Left.

Astonishingly, the producer, Jane Gabriel, in a subsequent defence of the programmes has declared that she did not trouble to interview any non-Communist resisters because what had been at issue in wartime Greece was a confrontation between the (Communist-controlled) EAM/ELAS resistance movement and the British.

ALL THIS IS uncomfortably reminiscent of the line espoused in a documentary shown in Greece on the state-controlled ERT channel in October 1982. I had the misfortune to take part in this demented programme, whose sheer awfulness makes Channel Four's *The Hidden War* look almost acceptable. The underlying thesis, if such it can be called, of *Mnimi '40* was that in 1940-41 Greece's principal enemy was not Italy or Germany but Britain. Her only friend was the USSR. Britain was portrayed as cynically using Greece as a bait to lure Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia into a struggle to the death which would leave the way clear for fulfilment of Britain's plans for world domination, masterminded by, of all people, Neville Chamberlain. The British Embassy in Athens made a formal protest about the programme. Although the Greek Government replied that it did not represent an official view, the Deputy Director of Greek Radio and Television (the novel-

ist Vasilis Vasilikos, a political appointee) called the programme his “pride”.

Andreas Papandreou's PASOK (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement) government will certainly have found *The Hidden War* very much to its taste, for it serves to legitimise one of its most cherished claims: namely, that it is the heir and natural successor to the wartime resistance movement EAM (the National Liberation Front)—albeit an EAM purged of its Stalinist leadership. ELAS (the National Popular Liberation Army) was the military wing of EAM; and both organisations from their inception were under tight Communist control, even though few of the rank-and-file were committed Communists. It is noteworthy that the only two Greek interviewees in the programme who are likely to be known to a non-Greek audience—Markos Vafiadis and Manolis Glezos, who as Communists were both very much involved with EAM during the War—are now closely identified with PASOK. There is a certain amount of ill-disguised and essentially irrelevant pro-PASOK propaganda in the London series—the general idea being that the ideals of social justice and freedom from foreign domination for which EAM claimed to have stood have now found fulfilment in the Greece of PASOK. This, coupled with the listing of the Greek state-controlled Olympic Airways in the British credits, has given rise to rumours of possible Greek government funding for the series. The Independent Broadcasting Authority, however, has given a categorical assurance that no outside funding was involved. And why should the Greek Government stump up scarce foreign currency when Channel Four was quite eager to underwrite a series of programmes which, *inter alia*, promote PASOK's view of the controversial past?

PASOK certainly merits praise for the long-overdue official recognition of the wartime resistance and also deserves credit for giving blanket permission for repatriation of the remaining political refugees from the civil war, or at least those of non-Slav Macedonian origin. For, in the later stages of the civil war, the Communist Democratic Army contained a substantial proportion of Slav Macedonians from northern Greece, and these are still prevented from returning permanently to their homeland. But it was PASOK's conservative predecessors who initiated the process. Repatriation on a small scale got under way as early as the 1950s, while by 1978, long before the advent of a Socialist government, 80% of those who had applied to return had been given permission.

It is, moreover, patently absurd to argue that only now can recent history be openly discussed in Greece. Critical re-evaluation of the recent past got under way with the downfall of the Colonels' dictatorship in 1974, and even before. Again, the London programmes' emphasis on PASOK's commitment to national reconciliation conveniently overlooks the sustained effort made during the 1985 election campaign to tar the leader of the conservative opposition party, Nea Dimokratia, with the brush of wartime collaboration. Constantine Mitsotakis, the target of this attack, is one of the very few prominent post-War politicians to have a record of active involvement in the Resistance. It is a pity that the leadership of PASOK did not dissociate itself more

energetically from the vicious mud-slinging by elements of its rank-and-file.

MAKING ALL ALLOWANCE for the difficulty of rendering the complexities of recent Greek history intelligible on television, the commentary was not only partial but quite unacceptably slipshod. Chronology was distorted, dates were wrong, and elementary howlers were committed. The battle of El Alamein, for instance, was placed at the beginning of 1943, when in fact it got under way at the end of October 1942. The spectacular destruction, on 25 November 1942, of the Gorgopotamos Viaduct, carrying the Salonica-Athens railway, might indeed have taken place in time to affect the outcome of the desert battle had not ELAS, in the person of Ares Veloukhiotis, dragged its feet when a British sabotage party, commanded by Brigadier E. C. W. Myers, was parachuted into the mountains at the end of September 1942. But of this we are given no hint, while Napoleon Zervas, who eagerly and promptly volunteered the services of his non-Communist EDES (National Republican Greek League) forces for this operation, is consistently denigrated. Some of the statements in the script are patently absurd, eg, that Britain's “client” governments in Greece had imprisoned 80,000 “former ELAS partisans” by the summer of 1945. Certainly very large numbers of Leftists, real or imagined, were rounded up; but even ELAS's military commander, General Sarafis, never claimed a *total* strength of more than 50,000.

Downright errors apart, highly arguable statements in the commentary are passed off as undisputed fact. A case in point is the bald assertion that “the British” (which agency is intended is not specified), bent on using Napoleon Zervas as a non-Communist counterweight to EAM/ELAS, blackmailed him into taking to the mountains by threatening him with denunciation to the Germans. Whatever may have been the case in 1943 and still more in 1944, it is preposterous to argue that the British envisaged such a role for Zervas as early as 1942, when they had only a hazy picture of the political realities of occupied Greece. Leaving aside the inherent improbability of placing such heavy reliance on someone who had to be press-ganged into resisting, just what evidence is there for this purported British blackmail of Zervas?

None is offered in the programme. But Jane Gabriel and her historical consultant, Professor Yannis Yannouloupoulos of the Panteios School of Political Science in Athens, rely on a passage in a report on SOE (Special Operations Executive) activities in Greece held in the Liddell Hart archive at King's College, London. This, in turn, is based on a claim made by a Greek who operated an SOE transmitter in Athens, under the pseudonym “Prometheus II”, that he had had to resort to blackmail of this kind. Even if one accepts that Captain Koutsogiannopoulos did personally make such a threat, it is wholly unwarranted to deduce from this that he was acting under British instructions. Jane Gabriel attaches particular credence to the SOE report, in the belief that it was compiled by C. M. Woodhouse (Brigadier Myers's successor as head of the British Military Mission). Not only was this report not written

by Woodhouse, but the particular passage on which she relies manifestly *could not* have been written by him; it was clearly the work of a non-native speaker of English.

Zervas is portrayed in the programmes as a royalist and a collaborator, and by implication his followers in EDES (not one of whom was interviewed) are tarred with the same brush. The question of Zervas's "royalism", however, and indeed of his "collaboration", is a complex one and deserves far more careful treatment than it received. In explaining ELAS's attack on EDES in the autumn of 1943 the London script states that ELAS had accused Zervas of collaboration. As if to justify the allegation, the camera then cuts to Nigel Clive, a former Secret Intelligence Service operative in Greece (wrongly described as having been with SOE), saying that Zervas maintained contact with the Germans through two officers in Jannina. The viewer is given no inkling that Clive in the course of his interview had emphasised that these contacts took place only *after* Zervas had come under all-out attack from ELAS. This may not justify the contacts, but at least it explains them. But while the programme dwells on Zervas's "collaboration", we hear nothing of ELAS's own contacts with the Germans, the most sinister of which took place on the eve of the liberation. In denigrating the non-Communist resistance and in seeking to sustain the thesis that all serious resistance was of Communist inspiration, the series, not surprisingly, gives no hint of the tergiversations of the Greek Communist Party (KKE) during the winter of 1940-41—before a clash between "rival imperialisms" (Britain and Nazi Germany) had been transformed into "the great patriotic war for the defence of the Soviet Union".

MS GABRIEL HAS MADE GREAT PLAY with the notion that her series is the first effort at a popular level to throw light on events about which there has been a conspiracy of silence for the past 40 years. Speaking on the BBC's Greek Service, she declared that it was only through talking to Greek friends that she became aware that there had even been a civil war ("It is not something you would ever hear about here"). In an interview in *The Guardian* she made the equally fatuous claim that the civil war has been a taboo subject in Britain.¹ The only ban on the discussion of the civil war that I am aware of was that imposed by Ms Gabriel's own employers, TV South, when they forbade her to participate in a public discussion of the programmes at the London School of Economics²—a prohibition with which she complied. The civil war was given extensive coverage at the time in newsreels, magazines and newspapers, and over the past 30 years there has been a flood of books in English, at both scholarly and popular levels, dealing with the decade of the 1940s in Greece.

¹ BBC Greek Service, 18 January 1986; *The Guardian*, 8 January 1986.

² See *The Times Diary*, 14 February 1986.

³ Yannis Yannouloupoulos, in *Avgi*, 31 January 1986.

⁴ Winston Churchill, *The Second World War* (1954), vol. vi, p. 252.

Makers of TV documentaries are, of course, given to claiming to have unearthed for the first time facts that have long been in the public domain. Ms Gabriel's *Hidden War* is no exception. For instance, the historical consultant to the series, Professor Yannouloupoulos, maintains that the programmes presented to the British public for the first time "irrefutable proofs" of what he terms the systematic way in which the British provoked the clash with EAM/ELAS,³ by which he must mean the suppression of the Communist insurgency in Athens in December 1944. It is undeniably the case that Winston Churchill did not flinch from such a confrontation, and indeed seems to have relished the clash when it came. But the first programme in the series, *The Battle of Athens*, does not produce evidence to sustain his argument that the British authorities conspired to provoke the uprising so as to have a pretext to smash the Left.

NOR IS MUCH of the evidence that is adduced in the programmes in any sense new. What many viewers will doubtless have found a highly disconcerting indication of Churchill's animosity towards EAM/ELAS is his telegram of 5 December 1944 (sent, it should be noted, after ELAS forces had begun to attack police stations in the capital) to the military commander in Athens, General Scobie, ordering him to act as if he were in a "conquered city where a local rebellion is in progress. . . ." The partial manner in which this telegram has been quoted in the programmes is illustrated in the quotations at the head of this article. But, selectivity apart, Ms Gabriel and Professor Yannouloupoulos can scarcely claim that this particular document is being unveiled for the first time. The American columnist Drew Pearson leaked an accurate version of it, much to Churchill's chagrin, in the *Washington Post* as early as 11 December 1944, while Churchill himself gave the text of the telegram in his *The Second World War*, published in the 1950s,⁴ and it has since been cited by virtually every other writer on the period.

No effort is made to explain why Churchill felt such a sense of obligation to King George II of Greece. (He believed that the King had taken a courageous stand during the dark winter of 1940-41 when Greece was Britain's only active ally in Europe.) Nor is any effort made to explain why he developed such an antipathy towards EAM/ELAS, or why it was that so many British Liaison Officers (BLOs), a number of whom were distinctly "pink" in their political views, came to form such a low opinion of the leadership of the Communist Resistance. Their views were conditioned, more than anything else, by ELAS's use of terror against rival resistance groups and in coercing backsliders into the ranks of EAM. The programme totally fails to explain that it was the murder by an ELAS unit of Colonel Psaros, the impeccably republican leader of the small non-Communist resistance organisation EKKA, in April 1944, closely following on pro-EAM mutinies in the Greek armed forces serving under British command in the Middle East, that contributed so powerfully to Churchill's aversion to EAM/ELAS.

We hear nothing of all this. The producer asked C. M. Woodhouse to spell out the circumstances of Psaros's murder (which he did); Sir Geoffrey Chandler, another of those

interviewed, specifically emphasised to her that the Right-wing backlash following the December insurgency can only be understood in terms of antecedent Left-wing terror. In the programmes, however, Chandler is shown speaking *only* of Right-wing violence.⁵ In the second programme some acknowledgement is made of Left-wing violence but it is by no means made clear that the Left was involved in the cycle of terror and counter-terror from the beginning, and was not simply reacting to Right-wing provocation.

It would be quite wrong to suggest that EAM, which was a genuinely popular movement, achieved its dominance of the Resistance wholly, or even largely, through terror. But its resort to violence cannot be swept casually to one side. Nor can its appeal be explained (as Ms Gabriel would anachronistically have us believe) by its espousal of feminist issues. In an interview with Helen Chappell in *The Guardian* we learn that the “socialist [sic] partisans” granted women the right to vote. What we are not told is who selected those who stood as candidates.⁶

THE SECOND PROGRAMME in the three-part series—*The Civil War*—begins by taking it as axiomatic that “the British attitude had led to armed conflict with ELAS”, although this is a statement that could just as well have been stood on its head. We are then told that, whereas the Left abided by the terms of the Varkiza Agreement (February 1945) which concluded the December 1944 Communist insurgency, the Greek Government reneged on its commitment to an amnesty for political crimes and a purge of collaborators within the security forces.

It is undoubtedly true that ELAS did hand over substantial quantities of weapons, and that successive governments proved either unwilling, or unable, to carry out the terms of the agreement. What is not explained, however, is how the Left were, within a fairly short space of time, able to equip themselves with weapons for what we are told was self-defence against a vengeful Right.

The March (not February, as the film in a characteristically slovenly fashion states) 1946 election can scarcely be regarded as a true test of opinion; but none the less it did give the Left some chance, however flawed, of testing its popularity under a straightforward system of proportional representation. The Regent, Archbishop Damaskinos, had been fearful that the Far Left might secure as many as a third of the seats in Parliament, but in the event the Left, apparently against Soviet advice, refused to put up candidates. (It is misleading, incidentally, to say that “the West” alone appointed observers to oversee the elections. The Soviet Union was invited to participate but declined.)

The third programme in the series—*The Homecoming*—

although the least objectionable from an historical point of view, is suffused with an odd kind of naivety. Dwelling at great length on Right-wing repression of the Left in Greece during the 1950s and '60s, the makers appear to regard civil war as a kind of amateur boxing-match in which the contestants slug it out in the ring for all they are worth and then, as good sportsmen, shake hands and bear no grudge. Both sides were parties to appalling atrocities; and, however regrettable, it was probably inevitable that the victors should have taken it out on the vanquished.

The repression—although real—was mild in comparison with the treatment meted out to the losers in the concurrent civil wars in other countries of the Balkans. We are told of “manipulated elections”. But what we are not told is that in the elections of 1958, which are singled out as particularly corrupt, the United Democratic Left—which was essentially a front for the outlawed Communist Party—emerged as the principal opposition party, with a 24% share of the vote. Moreover, the political system, flawed though it was, did allow George Papandreou’s liberal Centre Union Government to break the Right’s monopoly of power in 1963. How the losers in Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania must have longed for a “repressive political system” on the Greek model. Forty years after the Communists seized power in those countries, the prospect of returned political exiles being interviewed in their homeland by Channel Four appears as remote as ever.

It was perhaps inevitable that the bulk of the returning Greek refugees should have found it difficult to concede that life during their long years of exile in the Eastern-bloc countries was anything less than idyllic; for to do so would have been to deprive their undoubted sacrifices of meaning. But could not the makers have unearthed a *single* interlocutor who was prepared to say *something* about the appalling hardships experienced by many of the refugees, not to mention the witch-hunts and persecutions as the KKE leadership sought scapegoats for its defeat in the civil war? In 1955 these were severe enough to provoke large-scale riots in Tashkent, where the bulk of the refugees in the Soviet Union were settled. It is a favourite conceit of the Greek Left, seemingly shared by the makers of these Channel Four programmes, that a Communist régime in Greece would somehow have proved qualitatively different from those established by her northern neighbours. The evidence for such an optimistic view is slight indeed. We are given no hint that the KKE never underwent effective de-Stalinisation. Nor, indeed, are we told that the Greek Communist Party’s subservience to the Soviet Union led to a major internal split in 1968. From this the “Interior” KKE was to emerge as a broadly “Eurocommunist” grouping alongside the orthodox KKE (which, however, has retained the allegiance of most of those on the Far Left).

COULD GIVE MULTIPLE EXAMPLES of the shortcomings of the Channel Four programmes as history, while even to the non-professional eye they have serious deficiencies as television. Some of the archival film material used,

⁵ Cf. Sir Geoffrey Chandler’s letter in the *Daily Telegraph*, 26 February 1986.

⁶ See *The Guardian*, 8 January 1986.

deriving from both parties to the civil war, was clearly staged—but the unwary were given no hint of this. Material apparently shot on the Albanian front in the winter of 1940-41 was used to illustrate resistance during the Occupation. Moreover, some of the material appeared not to derive from the decade of the 1940s at all. One very grainy clip of ox-drawn wagons purportedly lumbering towards the Albanian frontier looked much more like a scene from the exodus of Greek refugees from Asia Minor in the wake of the Greek defeat at the hands of the Turkish nationalists—in 1922.

Little of the visual material was explained, and some of it was presented in a thoroughly misleading way. A case in point is the picture of an air-drop in a context leading the viewer to assume that it was of supplies to Napoleon Zervas's EDES. In fact, it shows a daylight drop to ELAS on Mount Vermion in October 1944, which took place long after the British authorities had developed grave suspicions as to the long-term political objectives, and indeed the immediate military intentions, of EAM/ELAS. If the British were truly engaged in a systematic policy of provoking conflict with EAM/ELAS, then it seems odd that they should have continued to send in weapons, in this and in other cases, at such a late date, and that the numbers of British troops accompanying George Papandreou's government-in-exile on its return to Greece in the autumn of 1944 should have been so small.

It was regrettable that the interviews with Greeks (many of them of considerable interest) were not sub-titled as the best current practice prescribes. Instead we were given voice-overs. These not only did not always appear to coincide precisely with the snatches of Greek that could be heard, but were articulated in the Greek equivalent of "proper" BBC accents, which jarred with the voices of the predominantly peasant interviewees.

THE MOST SERIOUS OBJECTIONS to the Channel Four programmes as television have been voiced by a number of the British participants. They have complained that their contributions were selectively edited so as to fit in with a preconceived editorial line, and that they were given no advance indication of the in-built bias.

Channel Four has carried out its own internal inquiry, at

the behest of the Independent Broadcasting Authority. The findings are that, in three of the four cases complained of, the testimony of British participants had not been distorted. One of those interviewed, Geoffrey Chandler, had, "without malice on anyone's part", been unfairly edited. The IBA subsequently conceded that Nigel Clive's views had not been fully reflected, and acceded to the demand of not only Chandler but also of Clive and Brigadier Myers that their interviews be excised in their entirety before the series is shown again.⁷

The inquiry was unable to resolve a direct conflict of evidence on some points, and on others found that the recollections of those interviewed as to what they had said must have been incorrect. Since Channel Four, which commissioned the programmes in the first place, refuses to release its own internal report, it is clearly not possible to judge the rigour and thoroughness with which it carried out its investigation. The outsider, without access to all the relevant documentation (and more particularly to the unedited tapes and transcripts of the interviews), is clearly not in a position to make an informed judgment on these contentious issues. Even the tapes would not necessarily enable a categorical answer to be given on the crucial question of selective editing, for at least one of the complainants believed the cameras to have been rolling at a given juncture when (according to the makers) they were not.

As to whether the participants were adequately informed in advance about the nature of the programmes, Channel Four has concluded that, while there was no knowing deception, it was regrettable that the general thrust of the programmes was not made clearer. The makers have argued that the working title *Kapetanios*—a term used for ELAS guerrilla leaders—(and its use on the clapper-board) should have forewarned potential participants that the programmes would focus on EAM/ELAS. At least one of the contributors, however, was under the impression that the programme was to be called *A Modern Greek Tragedy*. In her initial letter to another contributor, the producer made no mention of *any* title, and gave no hint as to the programmes' overall line. It is clearly odd and unsatisfactory that at least four of the British participants should have formed a "wrong" impression as to their editorial thrust.

In the light of this fundamental conflict of evidence between the makers of the series and those who have complained, it would appear sensible for those considering taking part in future Channel Four documentaries (or any similar television programme) to insist on the right to attend a preview at a stage in the production process when amendments can still be incorporated if they feel that they have been unfairly edited or are unhappy about the context in which their remarks have been placed. In the case of *The Hidden War*—contrary to established (and, from the programme-makers' viewpoint, prudent) convention—the British participants were not invited to any preview where they might have been expected to make their objections known. Brigadier Myers specifically asked to be allowed to preview before the programmes were broadcast. He was told that this would not be possible, for technical reasons. None the less, there was at least one press preview—to which he

⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 11 June 1986. Following the publication of the IBA's adjudication, Richard Gott published a long piece in *The Guardian* (5 July 1986), in which he painted the uproar provoked by the *Hidden War* series as a backs-to-the-wall effort by members of the British Establishment to protect their reputations. He complained, correctly, that neither the IBA nor Channel Four in their inquiries had addressed the programmes' treatment of history.

But Gott's own few references to matters of history as opposed to opinion are invariably wrong; he betrays his simple ignorance of the literature of the subject by listing the historical consultant to the series, Dr Yannis Yannouloupoulos, among the historians who have contributed to a revisionist interpretation of Greek history in the 1940s. For Dr Yannouloupoulos has not published on this period, and not the least of the puzzles surrounding the series is the selection of an historical consultant who is not a recognised authority on Greece in the 1940s.

was not invited, although Marion Sarafis, one of those advising the makers of the series, was able to attend.

Those prepared to be interviewed would also be well advised to insist on being supplied with a video, well in advance of transmission, of their entire interview—a simple and inexpensive matter with modern technology. (A do-it-yourself tape recording such as Tony Benn habitually makes whenever he is being interviewed would not be enough, in view of misunderstandings as to whether the camera was rolling at a given moment.)

COMPLAINTS OF biased, selective editing and of a failure by the makers to make their political intentions clear, disturbing though they are, in a sense are beside the point. For if the intention of the makers of the series was indeed to offer an “alternative” view to that supposedly monopolised by the British Establishment for the past 40 years, the question naturally arises: why bother to interview the proponents of the “traditionalist” view at all?

This question becomes all the more insistent in view of the unpleasant degree of personal animus manifested by the historical consultant to the series, Professor Yannouloupoulos, towards precisely that group of British participants who were moved to complain of their treatment by the programme-makers. In defending the programmes from attack by the KKE (which was upset by their anti-Soviet tone) and urging that they be shown in Greece, he also launched into an unattractive, albeit revealing, tirade (which he has subsequently repeated) against C. M. Woodhouse and his contemporaries. Claiming that “the Woodhouse group” had denounced *The Hidden War* for rewriting history (Woodhouse, it should be noted, had made no public comment on the programmes at the time Yannouloupoulos was writing), he went on to denounce Woodhouse—who has written extensively on this and other periods of modern Greek history—as “a self-styled historian”. He further charged that Woodhouse and his fellow

⁸ Avgi, 31 January 1986. Avgi is the paper of the Eurocommunist KKE of the Interior. Similar charges, in virtually identical language, were made, anonymously, in *Anti*, 14 February 1986. Cf. also *Anti*, 28 March 1986. Yannouloupoulos further questions Woodhouse’s credentials as an historian in a curious piece in *Ta Nea*, 13 August 1986.

This purports to be the text, as printed in *The Times*, of his reply to an article of mine of 29 January 1986 in which I drew attention to some of the more egregious historical errors in the series. Not only was his letter to *The Times* never published (it was far too long and was sent some five weeks after my original article had appeared), but the Greek text differs in significant respects from the English version as sent to *The Times*—notably in its abusive references to Woodhouse and myself. It is axiomatic that the historian respect the integrity of texts. Yet Yannouloupoulos shows himself incapable of respecting the integrity even of his own writings.

⁹ *South Slav Review*, Spring-Summer 1984, p. 27; *Ta Nea*, 24 December 1984; *Index on Censorship*, February 1986, p. 13.

¹⁰ In a Greek newspaper article (*Ta Nea*, 24 December 1984) she had warned that proponents of the official Anglo-American interpretation would not lightly give way to the revisionists: “The colonialist dragon, now trapped, will lash out its tail in all directions.”

¹¹ Marion Sarafis, “The Black Hole”, *Index on Censorship*, February 1986, p. 13.

British Liaison Officers had been too cowardly to attend conferences devoted to Resistance history, for fear of being confronted with uncomfortable evidence of Britain’s wartime machinations.⁸

Leaving aside Professor Yannouloupoulos’s curious notion that the function of academic conferences is to constitute a kind of War Crimes Tribunal, the charge is nonsensical. Of the four conferences to which he specifically refers, the London conference (1978) was attended by Myers, N. G. L. Hammond, and Bickham Sweet-Escott; the Washington conference (also 1978) by Woodhouse; the Copenhagen conference (1984) by Clive. Woodhouse was the only British person with experience of wartime Greece to be invited to the Athens (1984) conference, and it is true that he declined to attend.

This, however, could have come as no surprise. For Woodhouse was invited to speak on the subject of “Contacts between the Resistance Organisations and the Germans”. Unless the organisers believed (although this can scarcely have been the case) both that Napoleon Zervas’s contacts with the Germans were authorised by the British, and that Woodhouse was privy to them *at the time they were made*, it simply makes no sense to ask a British officer to talk on such a subject. A German (or Austrian) officer who had been in Greece during the War might have been able to talk usefully on such a topic, as might someone who had worked extensively on the German records. Woodhouse has not. One is left with the uncomfortable impression that this topic may have been selected to create the maximum embarrassment for Woodhouse and his former comrades-in-arms in EDES (virtually all of whom were unaware of Zervas’s dealings at the time) by putting him in the position of publicly denouncing Zervas, at a conference in Athens, as “a collaborator”.

ANOTHER OF THOSE INVOLVED with the making of Channel Four’s *Hidden War*—Marion Sarafis, the English widow of General Sarafis, the military commander of ELAS—has manifested a disturbing animus against Woodhouse, accusing him of displaying a “colonial” mentality and refusing to come to terms with British responsibility for civil strife. She has also accused Woodhouse—and myself—of “boycotting” and “cold-shouldering” the Athens conference.⁹ In an interview on the BBC Greek Service (8 February 1986), apropos *The Hidden War* and other revisionist interpretations of the period, she declared, “We have truly won the historical debate.” But, she said, she had earlier predicted¹⁰ that there would be a backlash, and it had taken the form of an almost despairing struggle to save “the official Anglo-American interpretation”. She has also made the grotesque charge that “the British and US protectors” (among whom she clearly numbers Woodhouse and me) are finding it hard to accept the “liberation and newly-won independence of Greek historians”.¹¹

Mrs Sarafis and Professor Yannouloupoulos must surely know that this is nonsense. C. M. Woodhouse, as a Visiting Professor in my department at King’s College, London, has shown an indefatigable willingness to debate the history of this period with all comers, including Greek historians (newly

liberated or not), in a series of seminars which he and other British participants in these events have given over the best part of fifteen years. Mrs Sarafis has attended virtually all of these seminars, and Professor Yannouloupoulos some of them.

Nor has Woodhouse hesitated to discuss these issues in Greece. In March 1978 he and I took part in a public discussion of the wartime period; it was the first to include a representative cross-section of participants in the Resistance to take place in Greece since the end of the War. Mrs Sarafis has accused both of us of peddling the "official", "colonialist" version of Britain's role in wartime Greece. But it was noteworthy that no representative of official Britain could be described in the audience on that occasion (the debate was organised by the Greek Service of the BBC and, despite a bomb scare, proved a notable success). Presumably "official" Britain was otherwise engaged at an alternative attraction thoughtfully laid on for the same evening by the British Council, a madrigal recital given by "The Clerkes of Oxenford".

SINCE the historical mentors to the series appear to regard "the Woodhouse group" as mere propagandists, parroting some "Establishment" line, one is again moved to ask: what purpose was served by interviewing them at all? Why not let the other side have their say—and to hell with the "official" view? Could it be that the makers were anxious to include "the Woodhouse group" in the programmes because their mere participation might lend a spurious legitimation to the "revisionist" theses that were being concocted? If the programmes had been shown in Greece (and they seem to have been made with a Greek as much as a British audience in mind), then the presence of "the Woodhouse group" would surely have been interpreted as a belated confession by the British of wartime crimes against Greece. It is noteworthy that neither Dr Yannouloupoulos nor the London programme-makers have sought to rebut Woodhouse's contention that the programmes were intended, in the minds of some of those involved, to be shown in Greece as "a British-made recantation of past errors".¹²

This was certainly the reaction of *Rizospastis*, the Greek Communist Party daily, to the first programme in the series. A correspondent who had seen the programme while in London had rubbed his eyes at British "self-criticism" about their role in wartime and post-War Greece:

"It's not possible, I said over and over again, that such an excess of sincerity has led them to say these things. To say that their object was not to let Greece slip from their

hands. Not to allow the Greek people to be masters of their own destinies. . . . [You could] not believe your own ears."¹³

Odd though it might appear, for some of those involved *The Hidden War* appears to have been seen as an opportunity of stealing the thunder of the film version of Nicholas Gage's well-known personal history *Eleni* (1983)—which opened in Greece, to fanfares of publicity (and picketing by the KKE), at the end of March 1986. Significantly, each of Professor Yannouloupoulos's outbursts against "the Woodhouse group" has been accompanied by clear signs of apprehension as to the likely effect of the film of the best-selling book of the former *New York Times* correspondent in Athens, coupled with abusive references to Woodhouse's review of *Eleni* in the *New York Review of Books* (18 August 1983). Few with any serious knowledge of the period would argue that the Left had any monopoly on barbarity. None the less, the paroxysms of rage induced in them by Nicholas Gage's compelling "factional" account of the tragic persecution, torture, and execution of his mother by the Communists are quite extraordinary.

In radical-chic circles in Athens and elsewhere, the counter-attack against Gage's *Eleni* has been coupled with a campaign of personal denigration of Woodhouse. Kevin Andrews, an American writer living in Greece (who has recently become a Greek citizen), turned what was ostensibly a review of *Eleni* into a torrent of abuse directed at Woodhouse, who was described as not only a conservative but "a 16th-century conservative", and as the man most responsible for the December 1944 clash with ELAS.¹⁴ Andrews would not, I think, claim academic legitimacy for his embittered and intemperate farrago. But academics who certainly should know better have lighted on his onslaught on Woodhouse with what can only be described as unholy, and certainly unacademic, glee. Such was his delight at having his own prejudices confirmed by Andrews that Ole Smith (a specialist in modern Greek history at the University of Copenhagen) was moved to throw overboard the customarily rigorous standards of historical scholarship that he applies to the work of others. Like Yannouloupoulos, he dismisses Woodhouse as a non-historian and writes off Nicholas Gage's account of his mother's torment as "trite melodrama". Even more extraordinarily, Gail Holst Warhaft, who has taught the history of the Greek Resistance at Cornell, has sought to raise from the dead one of the few British Liaison Officers sympathetic to ELAS—as a stick with which to chastise Woodhouse. Manifestly confused, she has accused him of ignoring the protestations of someone purporting to be "Rufus" Sheppard; Sheppard was killed by a mine in December 1944. Preposterously, she claimed that that Sheppard is still alive, albeit stripped of his rank by the British for backing ELAS against Napoleon Zervas.¹⁵

THE *HIDDEN WAR*, then, is not only bad history and bad television, but should be seen against the background of efforts to denigrate the testimony of British and other eyewitnesses to the events of wartime Greece—

¹² See the letters of C. M. Woodhouse and Yannis Yannouloupoulos, *Daily Telegraph*, 17 June and 2 July 1986.

¹³ *Rizospastis*, 26 January 1986.

¹⁴ Review of *Eleni* in *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1984), pp. 57-8.

¹⁵ Ole Smith, Gail Holst Warhaft, letters in *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (Fall 1984), 102-104. Ms Warhaft's subsequent efforts to extricate herself from her *faux pas* have served only to highlight her gullibility and carelessness. See Vol. XII, No 3 (Fall 1985) p. 83.

testimony which runs counter to a romanticised view of the role of the Greek Left in the 1940s that is currently the fashion in Greece (and elsewhere). It goes without saying that the accounts of British participants in these events should be treated critically, as should any historical source. But the serious study of the tumultuous history of Greece in the 1940s is scarcely likely to be advanced when altogether too many historians—and others, Greek and non-Greek, some of them closely involved with the making of *The Hidden War*—have yet to absorb one of the elementary, but none the less cardinal, ground rules of historical discourse: namely, that *ad hominem* invective is no substitute for reasoned debate.¹⁶

Some Yugoslav historians are currently moving towards a more nuanced interpretation of the traumatic events of the 1940s in their country. It is all the more dispiriting, therefore, that some historians on the Left in Greece, in seeking to displace a distorted Right-wing orthodoxy that prevailed in Greece throughout much of the post-War period, are as yet incapable—as even a Left-wing journalist, Yannis Andrikopoulos, has written apropos *The Hidden War*—of presenting the recent history of their country with any greater degree of sophistication than, say, Albania's Enver Hoxha: namely, as a conflict between “wicked imperialists” on the one hand and lilywhite progressive patriots on the other.¹⁷

The series has exposed serious editorial weaknesses in such procedures as exist at Channel Four for vetting programmes before they are transmitted. Had the programmes been made for showing on BBC or ITV, then at some stage before transmission someone in the hierarchy would have (or at least should have) been asking some pointed questions. Had, for instance, any effort been made to apprise the British participants of an editorial line that the makers must have known would have been repugnant to many of them? Someone might even have asked for evidence for some of the odder assertions made in the programme. Did anyone at Channel Four in fact view the programmes before they were transmitted? If so, at what level? Were any doubts expressed? Lame apologies from Channel Four after the event scarcely constitute an adequate response to the fundamental issues that the series has raised.

At the beginning of November 1986, Channel Four, no doubt mindful of its statutory duty to maintain overall bal-

ance in its programming, returned to the topic with an hour-long “balancing programme”. No one could reasonably accuse this programme, optimistically entitled *Greece—A Search for the Truth*, of being other than even-handed. In sharp contrast to the crude simplifications of *The Hidden War*, it did bring out the complexities and ambiguities, although the discussion was narrowly focused on the period of the War and on the degree of Britain's responsibility for the course of subsequent events. It must, however, have been largely unintelligible to those without a good background knowledge of the period.

The format chosen, in its obsessive and inappropriate concern with “political balance”, was more fitting for a discussion among politicians in a sensitive pre-election period than for a reasoned discussion of contemporary history. The flaws in this approach were highlighted by the choice of the novelist Stratis Haviaras to fill the “Left-wing” slot in the “protagonists” panel. A child in the 1940s, he was a party to the discussion neither on account of having participated in the events nor because of specialised knowledge, but rather because he had the desired *political* reflexes in his attitudes to the period.

I declined to participate in this follow-up programme, on a number of counts. I had grave doubts (in the event fully justified) about the proposed format. Moreover, it was quite clear that I was to be cast in the role of the “Right-wing” historian—as if criticism of the historical slovenliness of *The Hidden War*, together with sympathy for the complaints of mistreatment by the British participants, had somehow necessarily turned me into an apologist for what defenders of the series simplistically insist on regarding as an “establishment” or “official” view of the recent Greek past.

NO DOUBT the top brass at the IBA and Channel Four will have heaved a collective sigh of relief with the showing of *Greece—A Search for the Truth*, and hoped that that was the end of the matter. But the fundamental questions raised by *The Hidden War* and the ensuing controversy cannot simply be dissipated by 50 “balanced” minutes of “talking heads”. *The Hidden War* is by no means the only recent historical documentary to provoke severe criticism from those with specialist knowledge. If such programmes are to continue to be made, clearly-understood ground rules will have to be established and adhered to. Not the least of the disservices of *Greece—The Hidden War* is that, besides seriously setting back the prospects for rational discussion of recent Greek history at the popular level, it has in general done considerable harm to the cause of making television documentaries on controversial aspects of recent history.

¹⁶ See, for instance, in *Kathimerini* (7 March 1986) the onslaught on me as one of the “paternalistic governesses” of Greece's historical memory, by Dr Procopis Papastratis of the University of Crete in a defence of the *Hidden War* series.

¹⁷ Yannis Andrikopoulos in *Eleftherotypia* (27 February 1986). Andrikopoulos, characteristically, cannot forbear a swipe at “the bile flowing from the pen of Richard Clogg”.

LETTERS

Milton Friedman Replies

E. J. MISHAN in "Fact, Faith & Myth" (ENCOUNTER, November 1986) writes:

"... in pursuance of the 'National Plan' recourse is had to 'direction of labour', regarded by Western liberals as a violation of personal freedom."

And, pray tell, just what is "direction of labour" regarded as by non-Westerns and non-liberals? Surely, anyone capable of writing such a sentence has a problem in achieving credibility with any believer in human freedom—Western, Eastern, Southern, or Northern.

Mishan makes clear in the rest of his diatribe that he regards "Western liberal" and "radical Right" as synonyms—an identification that, as a "liberal", I certainly reject. As the diatribe proceeds, it becomes clear, despite Mishan's lip-service to working "through or with the market", that the closest approximation to his ideal stationary state is Enver Hoxha's Albania. True, Mishan would prefer that inhabitants of his Utopia had started with a higher material standard of life and greater personal freedom than was vouchsafed to the inhabitants of Albania. Who would not prefer to have his cake and eat it too? But if he were persuaded, as I am, that such a higher standard of life and greater personal freedom were incompatible with a stationary state, it is not at all clear from his article which he would choose.

Is Mishan's philosophy destined to become ENCOUNTER's new orthodoxy, a disturbing possibility that is suggested by the paternalistic and nostalgic dirigism of *M's* column in the same issue of ENCOUNTER.

Incidentally, Mishan's one reference to my wife's and my book, *Free to Choose*, is incorrect. On pages 30-32 (of the hard-cover version) we discuss the effects of spillovers in reducing individual choice—something Mishan says that we do not mention.

MILTON FRIEDMAN
Senior Research Fellow

Hoover Institution
Stanford, California

HOW PLEASANT to be criticised, even in passing, by Professor Friedman. Paternalistic? Why not, when one's a father? Nostalgic? Yes: for the days before the tourist hordes and hotels despoiled the beauty-spots. But dirigist? Hardly—

since the "Column" in question was urging any still unspoiled places not to distort their economies by trying to attract package tours.

M

Pearce's Transatlantic Follies

EDWARD PEARCE, in "Transatlantic Differences" (ENCOUNTER, July-August), accuses the United States of dangerous and unreasonable activism, and tries to explain what he sees as a result of this: increasing anti-Americanism with possibly fatal consequences for the West.

Three of his points deserve comment. Since I do not know to what extent Pearce shares the views he reports, I do not direct my criticism at him. Let me say at the outset, however, that whoever holds such views is far more irresponsible and short-sighted—indeed, "decadent"—than any US President or Washington administration.

The first point concerns Gaddafi in particular and terrorism in general. Pearce defends, without argument, Mrs Thatcher's non-response to the murder of PC Yvonne Fletcher by Libyan terrorists in St James's Square. The Government at the time tried to assert that they were restrained from acting against the murderers because the latter were "protected by diplomatic immunity". Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg showed in his ENCOUNTER article (November 1984) that this assertion was quite false and that the Government itself did not believe it. Rather, they let the killers go in the belief that doing justice would bring retaliation by Gaddafi against British subjects and commercial interests.

The argument is that of all appeasers; and its only effect is to provoke more and worse terrorism and aggression. If we were dealing with Gaddafi alone, one could argue (though, in my view, still wrongly) that one should let him get away with murder because after all one day he will be gone. We are, however, dealing with an international system—apart from Libya, it includes Syria, North Korea, Cuba, and Nicaragua as well as numerous non-state organisations in the Middle East—which is supported financially, logistically, and diplomatically by the Soviet bloc. This system is directed by people who pay close attention to Western reactions. It is, in my view, certain that pusillanimous passivity is not only morally, but above all politically and strategically wrong. The US counterattack on Libya was not an "over-reaction"; it was actually inadequate.

The second point concerns Grenada. Pearce calls the US action in November 1983 "illegal, of course", thereby dis-

playing the same perverse view of international law alleged by those who said Britain could not punish the murderers of PC Fletcher. They imply that international law exists to permit violence, aggression, and war rather than to seek to prevent them. This is, of course, absurd; both customary and treaty law must and can be interpreted in each case so as to favour peace and stability.

In the case of Grenada, the US action (as shown at length by Professor John Moore of the University of Virginia) was legal on at least three counts, each of which is adequate by itself. The action was undertaken to rescue US nationals in immediate peril. It was requested by lawful authority (the Governor-General). It was approved by the regional peacekeeping group, the CECS. The UN Charter specifically permits and encourages regional peacekeeping arrangements which do not require Security Council sanction.

More nebulous and disputed defences, such as "humanitarian intervention", need not be alleged. The Grenada action was lawful not because the "New Jewel Movement" was murderous or because anarchy and violence existed on the island, but because it had the triple sanction just stated.

THE FINAL POINT concerns Pearce's whining plea that if the US President moves against Syria, "he mustn't do it from here!" It is amazing that Pearce considers it proper to complain in advance against a possible (but probably not contemplated) US response to Syrian-backed global terrorism, but not against that terrorism itself. If Pearce fears terrorism, he should welcome, not fear, actions against its backers and perpetrators. Strategic and diplomatic common sense, as well as historical experience, show that the organisers of international terrorism in Damascus, Tripoli, P'yongyang, Havana, Managua, and the capitals of the Soviet bloc are stimulated to further violence and anarchy by cringing fear, and are deterred only by force judiciously and proportionately applied.

THE TRAGEDY of contemporary West European decadence—caused by exhaustion and the fateful combination of economic prosperity and world-political irrelevance—is perfectly demonstrated by Pearce and his interlocutors. At its psychological core are two beliefs: that if we (the West Europeans) decide that "force and war are things of the past", they will in fact become things of the past. A nation or group of nations that believes this will not thereby abolish force and war. It may, however, abolish itself.

The other belief is that passivity and

patience are adequate surrogates for strategy and diplomacy. I do not say that US foreign policy is always, or even often, sensible; or that it always furthers the survival of the West. I do say, though, that unless and until the nations of Western Europe demonstrate that they have recovered a sense of what

Raymond Aron called "*la grande histoire*", their politicians and publicists should hesitate to pronounce on responsibilities they have no intention of sharing.

DAVID GRESS

Stanford
California

Galina & the Consequences

A Policy Dilemma—By LORD GLADWYN

THE wonderfully vivid—if appalling—description of life in modern Russia (*not* the Soviet Union!) contained in Galina Vishnevskaya's talk with George Urban in the December ENCOUNTER leaves me confirmed in my long-held impression that a totalitarian government is both inhuman and dangerous: more especially when it has for some 60 years possessed almost complete control over all that is heard, seen, or read in a State, the citizens of which are now naturally predisposed to accept whatever lies the government may wish to be put about to the disadvantage of truth, even if they may suspect in their heart of hearts that they may still be lies.

Thus it would seem, from what Galina says, that if the Politburo decided that war with the West was, for any reason, a political necessity, young Russians would happily engage in some conflict with the "capitalistic" enemy, convinced that in so doing they were simply defending the *rodina* against its natural enemies, as (so they are assured) was the case during "the Great Patriotic War".

It would also seem that there is no prospect whatever that the *Nomenklatura* will be induced by Western pressure to modify in any substantial way the means whereby they maintain themselves in power—in other words to give effect, in practice, to any of the Human Rights which they accepted at Helsinki, and to which indeed they subscribed when the USSR signed the Charter of the United Nations. Myself, I have not believed that there was ever any chance of their doing anything of the kind.

On the other hand, we must presumably also assume that the whole régime ("only 120 years away from serfdom"), being necessarily based on "treachery", and on a fundamental lie, can hardly be efficient—indeed must be less efficient than it was even under the Czars. So we may perhaps conclude that, short of a World War, it will one day simply have to reform itself, perhaps by some revolutionary process, perhaps by a military coup, however unlikely we may judge that to be in the foreseeable future. The trouble, no doubt, is that if either of these eventualities appeared on the horizon the

governing class might well see their own extinction looming, in which case they might prefer the terrible alternative of war.

More specifically, if the already bad economic situation in the USSR should get much worse, and if at the same time it was believed possible that a war, once begun, would not necessarily be nuclear and that, if so, the Russians in the absence of a strengthening of the conventional forces of the West, would have a good chance of arriving on the Rhine and beyond, this particular outcome can in no way be discounted.

At the same time the Russian leaders, however dangerous, are presumably influenced to some extent by reason, which must tell them that a war, even if it were only waged by conventional methods, however successful immediately, might well eventually have unfortunate results in Russia itself. If so, however horrible and evil we may judge the Soviet régime to be—and, on the face of it, the Gorbachov régime seems to be rather less horrible than that of Stalin and even that of Bulganin, Khrushchev, or Brezhnev—it is at least arguable that it is now sincere in wanting to arrive at some acceptable arrangement on Arms Control, in the expectation that an ensuing period of *détente* might enable it to (a) revive its ailing economy, and (b) prepare the way, not for another war, but for some eventual political "understanding" with Western European Governments that might result in the famous "Finlandisation" of the Continent.

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION, not put in Mr Urban's conversation, thus arises: What should our policy be? Should we simply refuse to treat with the barbarians, building up our own armaments to the point at which no Soviet Government, however desperate, could possibly think of going to war at all with success? Or should we continue to engage in Arms Limitation Talks with the intention of arriving at compromise solutions consonant with a similar assumed intention on the part of the great adversary? Is it possible, in other words, to imagine that the "evil" régime, no doubt for its own

purposes, is genuinely seeking at any rate a truce in the hostilities long pursued with the alien West?

I have for many years suggested that while tension will probably always be with us, a kind of *Zusammenleben* with the great totalitarian power in the East is at least conceivable and perhaps likely—provided always we do not expect this régime to change its spots, and provided there is no seeming intention on the part of the West actually to destroy the "*glacis*" in Eastern Europe which it created for itself as a result of its victory in World War II. This would not mean that the Soviet hold on the "*glacis*" would be removed, only that its grip might be slackened, if, by one means or another, the Russians were assured that the nations composing it would at least not be permitted to join any rival military bloc.

ARE THESE MUSINGS merely those of a Western "liberal" who does not recognise the ugly facts with which we are confronted? They might well be such if the nuclear weapon had never been invented. But in its presence it may be that "the logic of history" can no longer be said to apply, and that even Clausewitz is outdated. I believe, however, that Solzhenitsyn would be the first to disagree with this hypothesis, and I should be interested to know whether it is rather with him that Galina Vishnevskaya (or George Urban) would prefer to be associated in their general approach?

Of course I know that, whatever views they may hold, non-Russians are always accused by Russians of being ignorant of what is really going on in the Soviet Union, and hence incapable of drawing correct conclusions. But to the Western mind the two alternative methods of coping with the Slavic Empire are becoming increasingly clear and a definite choice between them increasingly necessary.

GLADWYN

House of Lords
London

Real Money

MAY I call your attention to a slight misstatement in Anthony Hartley's incisive account of the Thatcher Administration ("From Disraeli to Thatcher", ENCOUNTER, April 1986)?

It was not Senator Barry Goldwater, but the late irrepressible Republican Everett Dirksen of Illinois, who said: "A billion here and a billion there, and pretty soon you're talking real money. . . ."

After that, the refrain is more apt to be "*Après nous, le déluge*."

TED HUMES

Phoenix
Arizona

AUTHORS

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Ron Butlin's poetry and short stories have been widely published both here and in North America. His latest book of poems is *Ragtime in Unfamiliar Bars* (Secker & Warburg, 1985), and his new novel, *The Sound of My Voice*, is published this January by Canongate.

Stuart Henson's book of poems, *The Impossible Jigsaw*, was published in 1985 by Harry Chambers.

Edward Pearce, leader writer and Parliamentary sketch writer on the *Daily Telegraph*, is the author of two volumes of satirical sketches of Parliamentary personalities, *The Senate of Lilliput* and *Hummingbirds and Hyenas* (Faber, 1983, 1985).

Jean-François Revel writes a regular column for *Le Point* in Paris. His most recently translated work, *How Democracies Perish*, was published in 1985 by Weidenfeld (London) and Doubleday (New York).

Anthony Thwaite, Co-Editor of *ENCOUNTER* from 1973-85, returned in April 1986 from a Japan Foundation Fellowship attached to the University of Tokyo to join the Board of André Deutsch. He reviews novels regularly for *The Observer*. His collected poems were published in 1984 by Secker & Warburg, and his next book of poems, *A Letter from Tokyo*—a series of monologues portraying 17th-19th-century travellers—will be published in March by Century Hutchinson.

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M. R. D. Foot, Professor of Modern History at the University of Manchester from 1967-73, has written many works of military history, including the official history of *SOE in France* (HMSO, 1966), *Men in Uniform* (1961), *Resistance* (Eyre Methuen, 1976), *Six Faces of Courage* (Eyre Methuen, 1978), *An Outline History of the Special Operations Executive* (BBC Publications, 1984), and, as co-author, *M19: Escape and Evasion* (Bodley Head, 1979).

Sarah Whitfield is working on a book about the Fauve painters, to be published by Thames and Hudson, and is also collaborating on the catalogue raisonné of René Magritte.

Ruth Silcock's new collection of poems, *Mrs Carmichael*, will be published in February by Anvil Press.

George Steiner is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Geneva. His numerous works of literary criticism include *Language and Silence* (1967), *In Bluebeard's Castle* (1971), *After Babel* (1975), and *Antigones* (Oxford University Press, 1984).

Max Beloff, Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford, from 1957-74, and Principal of the University College at Buckingham, 1974-79, was created a life peer in 1981. His most recent books are *Wars and Welfare, Britain 1914-1945* (Edward Arnold, 1984) and, as co-author, *The Government of the United Kingdom* (Weidenfeld, 1985).

Roger Scruton is Professor of Philosophy at Birkbeck College, London. Among his recent works are *Sexual Desire: A Philosophical Investigation* (Weidenfeld, 1986), *Spinoza* (Oxford University Press, 1986), and *The Meaning of Conservatism* (Macmillan Press, 1984).

Noel O'Sullivan, Reader in Politics at the University of Hull, is the author of *Conservatism and Fascism* (Dent, 1976, 1983), and *Terrorism, Ideology and Revolution* (Wheatsheaf Books, 1986). A study of Corporatism of which he is co-author is to be published later this year.

D. J. Enright (Professor of English at the University of Singapore from 1960-70, Co-Editor of *ENCOUNTER* 1970-72, and a Director of Chatto & Windus 1974-82) is a freelance writer and teacher. His *Collected Poems* were published in 1981 by Oxford University Press, for whom he has edited *The Oxford Book of Contemporary Verse*, *The Oxford Book of Death*, and *Fair of Speech: The Uses of Euphemism* (1985). His most recent book is *The Alluring Problem: An Essay on Irony*, published by OUP in 1986.

Richard Clogg is Reader in Modern Greek History at King's College, London. He is the author of *A Short History of Modern Greece* (Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 1986), and is currently writing a history of SOE in Greece.

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Life & Letters Today



UNCOVERED: A first edition copy of the Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels "Manifesto of the Communist Party" was sold for £26,400 at Sotheby's in London yesterday.

The first edition of 1848 constitutes one of the rarest books in the world.

Its rarity value arises largely because many of the original 1,000 copies printed were immediately seized and destroyed when they reached the German border as the 1848 Revolution, in which Marx took an active part, erupted. Of the first issue, only three copies are known and only another ten of the second issue have survived.

The Nazis are believed to have destroyed copies during the last War, and the booklet sold yesterday itself seems to have been confiscated during the same purge. It bears the stamp of the Central Library of the "German Working Peoples' Front", a Nazi organisation which took over the trade unions in Germany.

It was not the first time the volume was in "unsympathetic" hands. It was once owned by one E. Wiris, a German Socialist émigré who, in 1854, attacked Marx publicly in a New York journal. The buyer yesterday was the Valmadona Trust, a private British collection.

It is an unpretentious 23-page booklet with its front cover missing.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

BITTER PILL: The man who coined the word "tabloid" died 50 years ago and medical people are about to celebrate the anniversary.

"Tabloid" means something which contains all your requirements in a concentrated form, as London Standard readers well know, but the term was first invented to describe tablets which previously had to be made to prescription.

Sir Henry Wellcome, the American-born pharmaceutical magnate, also brought us the sugar-coated pill.

LONDON STANDARD

BABBITRY: Governor Bruce Babbitt of Arizona is now being counted among the herd of Democratic Presidential aspirants. Although not yet a national figure, an astringent tongue is rapidly gaining him that essential electoral quality, "name recognition." Reviewing potential Republican rivals, he dismissed Congressman Jack Kemp as like the River Platte—"20 miles wide and about 6 inches deep"—and of George Bush he says that the Vice President "reminds every woman of her first husband."

DAILY MAIL

DRUGGED WORDS: The language of drug abuse reveals a subtle but nonetheless discernible shift in attitude towards this social problem [Herbert London writes].

In the '50s and '60s one got "hooked" on drugs. The hook was a matter of one's choosing. Peer group pressure was important, but ultimately the literature and popular culture depicted drug use as a matter of personal choice.

In "Man With The Golden Arm", a '50s film starring Frank Sinatra and Kim Novak, the Sinatra character becomes addicted to heroin, yet the script writer makes it clear

that the "victim" chose to take the drug and can choose not to take the drug, albeit "going cold turkey" is painful.

Since the '70s the cultural depiction of drug use has focused on the user as the random victim. When Michael Ray Richardson, basketball star for the New Jersey Nets, was discovered to be using cocaine, team officials described his condition as "a disease . . . a relapse of drug dependency."

In the late '60s the drug culture borrowed from the advertising community to suggest "better living through chemistry". With cocaine, the language became joyous. One takes "a toot" as if a horn is about to be played.

The drug culture has its own language and cues. But when our language confuses the issue, we confer on addicts a sympathy they do not deserve and one that exacerbates the problem.

Despite the exercise of his free choice, the addict often feels "victimised" because our euphemisms suggest that drug abuse falls into the category of disease.

The next time an athlete is described as having a "drug dependency relapse", remember he wasn't struck as if by lightning with the drugs.

NEW YORK POST

BLACK MISCHIEF: The then chairman of the Inland Revenue was pressed to tell the Commons Select Committee on the Treasury how many people lived off the "black economy". He patiently explained that the figure was, by definition, quite unobtainable [Jock Bruce-Gardyne writes].

The Committee had no patience with such pussy-footing. Eventually they succeeded in dragging from him what he admitted was no more than the purest guesswork, and ringed round with all sorts of qualifications, that there might be anything up to seven million people involved.

Ever since then that has become "the Inland Revenue's own figure" for the "black economy".

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

FOR EVER AND A DAY: First-ever, longest-ever, biggest-ever, hottest-ever, lowest-ever, and all the other abominations are no longer enough. "Ever" has now been redefined by ITN, which brought TV news yesterday evening of British Rail's

"worst-ever level crossing disaster for 18 years."

If infinity endures less than two decades we have clearly a lot of rethinking to do. On the other hand, it might be easier to try to turn back the torrent of tawdry tautology that pollutes our good plain language.

THE TIMES



OPENING MOVE? A chess magazine in Moscow has printed the first work by Vladimir Nabokov ever openly published in his native land, hailing the once-banned émigré author as a master of language and metaphor. Publication of a 2,000-word excerpt from Nabokov's Memoirs in the magazine "64" came nine years after he died and more than 30 years after his novel "Lolita" became a sensation in the West.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

Music, Musicians, and the Saint-Simonians

RALPH P. LOCKE

The disciples of Claude Henri de Bouvroy, comte de Saint-Simon, whose movement flourished in France from 1825–1835, are known for their views on how increased industrial production would benefit the working masses. This is the first study, however, to recognize how the arts, particularly music, were ideological tools central to their program. Locke surveys musicians such as Berlioz, Liszt, and Mendelssohn, whose association with the Saint-Simonians was tangential, and others who became their faithful followers, particularly Félicien David and Rouget de Lisle, composer of the "Marseillaise." Many musical examples are included. "[A] model of scholarly, judicious, and graceful writing."—Jacques Barzun

Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History

ARCADIUS KAHAN

Edited by Roger Weiss
Introduction by
Jonathan Frankel

These essays by the late distinguished economic historian present Kahan's penetrating, critical appraisal of the massive changes faced by Eastern European Jewry in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century periods of intense anti-Semitism, rapid economic growth, and migration. Kahan writes not just as a notable scholar but as one personally affected by the forces of recent history.



Women, Production, and Patriarchy in Late Medieval Cities

MARTHA C. HOWELL

Foreword by Catharine R. Stimpson

During the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, many women in Northern European cities played an active role in commerce and trade and even belonged to craft guilds. Taking the economies of Leiden and Cologne as case studies, Howell seeks to establish why women's labor status declined in later centuries. She argues that the realignment of patriarchal relations rather than the rise of capitalism brought about the change. "A unusually thoughtful book [that] will command the attention not only of people concerned primarily with women's studies but also of European historians more generally."

—Rudolph M. Bell *Women in Culture and Society series*

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Firearms and Fortifications

*Military Architecture
and Siege Warfare in
Sixteenth-Century Siena*

SIMON PEPPER and
NICHOLAS ADAMS

Vividly recreating the drama of the battlefield, the authors show how Renaissance architects balanced strategic and aesthetic concerns in designing fortifications. "A marvellous example of how scholars with imagination can dig into the history of one specific place and come up with material that enlarges our view of some of the major topics in Renaissance historiography."—Richard A. Goldthwaite, Johns Hopkins University. "This is a notable, and readable, achievement."—Sir John Hale, University College, London
61 halftones, 23 line drawings

Serfdom and Social Control in Russia

*Petrovskoe,
a Village in Tambov*

STEVEN L. HOCH

The legal and economic history of serfdom has been widely studied, but this is the first English-language portrait of the social life of Russian serfs. From his thorough research into the estate of the Gagarin noble family in Petrovskoe, Hoch reaches a significant and startling conclusion: the heads of three-generation serf households had a vested interest in preserving serfdom for they, as elders, enjoyed leisure, social status, power, and prestige. "A superb work."—Richard Hellie